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THE

WORKS

OF

WILLIAM COWPER, Esq.

COMPRISING

HIS POEMS,

CORRESPONDENCE, AND TRANSLATIONS.

WITH

A LIFE OF THE AUTHOR,

BY THE EDITOR,

ROBERT SOUTHEY, Esq. LL.D.

POET LAUREATE, ETC.

VOL. VIII.

LONDON:
BALDWIN AND CRADOCK,
PATERNOSTER ROW.
1836.

CHISWICK PRESS:
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ADVERTISEMENT.

1. This Volume contains such of Cowper's juvenile Poems as were published by Hayley, those which Mr. Croft published under the title of Early Productions, Cowper's part of the Olney Hymns, the Anti-Thelyphthora, and the volume of Poems by which, in 1782, he first made himself known to the public.

2. The pieces introduced by Hayley in his Life of the Poet, or appended to it, were either obtained from Cowper and Lady Hesketh, or pointed out to him by their author in the books wherein they had been published anonymously.

3. Mr. Croft's little, but most interesting volume appeared with the following title, dedication, and preface.

681647

POEMS,

THE EARLY PRODUCTIONS

OF

WILLIAM COWPER;

NOW FIRST PUBLISHED FROM THE ORIGINALS IN THE POSSESSION OF JAMES CROFT.

WITH ANECDOTES OF THE POET.

COLLECTED FROM LETTERS OF LADY HESKETH, WRITTEN DURING HER RESIDENCE AT OLNEY.

LONDON:—PRINTED FOR BALDWIN, CRADOCK, AND JOY.

1825.

TO

THE RIGHT HON. COUNTESS COWPER.

MADAM,

When I determined on publishing the following Poems, it was my wish to dedicate them to a lady of taste, and of elegant and amiable manners. With that impression, it was impossible to find any one who had a better claim to that character than Lady Cowper. I need not say, that I feel highly gratified in the opportunity of offering this my tribute of respect to one possessing these qualities in so eminent a degree; the more so, as I am persuaded, had the Poet been living, it would have been done by himself,

with greater abilities, but not with more sincerity, than by him, who has the honour of subscribing himself, with the greatest esteem,

Your Ladyship's
Most obliged and sincere friend.
JAMES CROFT.

PREFACE.

As it may be expected to mention the lady to whom the following Poems are addressed, it may not be deemed improper, at the same time, to notice the circumstances which occasioned them. The Life of Cowper having been already written, it is not necessary to repeat what his biographers have so ably done; but if there is any thing relative to this great genius, which could not be known at the time when his Life was published, it will not be amiss to mention the same, as every act of Cowper cannot but be interesting. The lady to whom these Poems are addressed, under the name of Delia, was the second daughter of Ashley Cowper, son of the Judge, and nephew of Lord Chancellor Cowper. This lady (Miss Theodora Jane Cowper) was first cousin to the Poet, the son of the Reverend Doctor Cowper, Rector of Great Berkhamstead, and brother to Ashley Cowper. The Poet formed an early attachment for his cousin Theodora,

an accomplished woman, with an elegant person, and possessing a superior understanding.

With such qualities, it is no wonder that he conceived a strong affection for her; and the lady, sensible of her cousin's amiable disposition, regarded him with equal affection. But, unfortunately, her father, from an idea that the union of persons so nearly related was improper, refused to accede to the wishes of his daughter and nephew; and as the former, from a strong sense of filial duty, would not consent to unite herself to her cousin without the approbation of her father, the happiness they had promised to themselves was altogether prevented.

But, though frustrated in their wishes, they did not cease to love, nor occasionally to meet. At this time these Poems were addressed to her on whose affections the Poet had placed all his happiness, still indulging the hope of possessing the object of his love. But it proved, alas! otherwise, as appears by the poem in which he speaks so feelingly of his separation from her: after which, it was their fate never to meet again.

In consequence of this disappointment, and other circumstances, he gave up his professional pursuits, and retired into the country, with a depression of spirits which continued at times to affect this amiable person to the end of his life.

To the credit of the lady she remained constant to him on whom she had placed her affections. Neither time nor absence could diminish her attachment. She preserved with the greatest care, for many years, these pleasing memorials of the beloved author; when, for reasons known only to herself, she sent them in a sealed packet to a lady, (her particular friend,) with directions not to be opened till after her decease. This took place on the twenty-second of last October, and her friend having died a short time previous to that event, her executors sent the packet to me, with other articles, according to the directions of that lady.

The Poems, though not equal to his later productions, yet appeared to me to possess the sweet muse of this delightful poet, in no small degree. Nevertheless, on first reading them, much as I know any productions of Cowper would gratify his many admirers, yet I did not feel disposed to make them public, fearing that my partiality might lead me to set a value upon them beyond their merit; and, knowing they could not add to his reputation, I was fearful of doing any thing to diminish the high character his poetry had so justly acquired. Not wishing, however, to deprive the public of any thing so interesting, and yet dreading to do any thing to lessen the fame of this admired Poet, I resolved to take the opinion of those whose judgement was superior to mine, and so necessary to guide

me in a point of this delicate nature. Under this impression, I placed them in the hands of some friends highly distinguished for talents and judgement.

Sanctioned by such authority, I shall feel most happy in having it in my power to gratify the admirers of Cowper with these his early productions, trusting they will afford as much delight to their readers, as they have to

Your obedient servant,

J. C.

4. The satire on his cousin Martin Madan, which was the first thing Cowper published in a separate form, came to my knowledge by mere accident, before those letters in which it is mentioned were entrusted to me. In a volume of Kippis's Biographia Britannica which I had sent for from a London catalogue, and which had been a presentation copy to its first possessor, I found—the reader may imagine with what surprise as well as pleasure—the following note, left in it by him as a marker.

FOR ISAAC REID, ESQ. 11, STAPLE'S INN.

DEAR SIR,

I find the Poem of Mr. Cowper's, to which I alluded this morning is entitled *Anti-Thelyphthora*, was printed in quarto by Johnson, in 1781, and is

noticed in the sixty-fourth volume of the Monthly Review, p. 229.

Mr. Hayley will be much obliged by the loan of Webb's Art of Poetry.

I am, dear Sir,

Very faithfully yours,

SAMUEL ROSE.

Chancery Lane, Tuesday.

Immediate enquiry was of course made; the poem was found in the British Museum, and a transcript taken from it for the press. I was enabled to correct this in the proofs by a copy of the original quarto pamphlet, for which I am obliged to Mr. Peace, of the Bristol Library, the (then unknown) friend to whom (in the first volume of this edition) I acknowledged my obligations for an Index to the Task, and for the collection of parallel passages with which his well-stored memory supplied him. It will be seen by them how thoroughly Cowper's mind was imbued with Milton.

Concerning the Anti-Thelyphthora, it suffices here to state, that the papers in the Monthly Review which so effectually demolished Martin Madan's arguments were written by Badcock; and that Cowper wished the authorship of the satire might remain secret, because of his relationship to the person against

whom it was aimed. What more I have to say of that remarkable person must be reserved for another place.

5. I have now only to give the original title of the first volume, and Mr. Newton's Preface, which having been printed with it, was withdrawn at the publisher's request, but restored at the writer's, eight years afterwards.

POEMS,

BY

WILLIAM COWPER,

OF THE INNER TEMPLE, ESQ.

Sicut aquæ tremulum labris ubi lumen ahenis
Sole repercussum, aut radiantis imagine lunæ,
Omnia pervolitat laté loca, jamque sub auras
Erigitur, summique ferit laquearia tecti.

VIRG. ÆN. VIII.

So water trembling in a polish'd vase,
Reflects the beam that plays upon its face;
The sportive light, uncertain where it falls,
Now strikes the roof, now flashes on the walls.

Nous sommes nés pour la vérité, et nous ne pouvons souffrir son abord; les figures, les paraboles, les emblémes, sont toujours des ornements nécessaires pour qu'elle puisse s'annoncer; et, soit qu'on craigne qu'elle ne découvre trop brusquement le défaut qu'on voudroit cacher, ou qu'enfin elle n'instruise avec trop peu de ménagement, on veut, en la recevant, qu'elle soit déguisée. CARACCIOLI.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR J. JOHNSON, NO. 72, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH YARD.

1782.

MR. NEWTON'S PREFACE.

When an author by appearing in print, requests an audience of the public, and is upon the point of speaking for himself, whoever presumes to step before him with a Preface, and to say, "Nay, but hear me first," should have something worthy of attention to offer, or he will be justly deemed officious and impertinent. The judicious reader has probably, upon other occasions, been beforehand with me in this reflection: and I am not very willing it should now be applied to me, however I may seem to expose myself to the danger of it. But the thought of having my own name perpetuated in connexion with the name in the title page, is so pleasing and flattering to the feelings of my heart, that I am content to risk something for the gratification.

This Preface is not designed to commend the Poems, to which it is prefixed. My testimony would be insufficient for those who are not qualified to judge properly for themselves, and unnecessary to those who are. Besides, the reasons which render it improper and unseemly for a man to celebrate his own performances, or those of his nearest relatives, will have some influence in suppressing much of what he might

otherwise wish to say in favour of a friend, when that friend is indeed an *alter idem*, and excites almost the same emotions of sensibility and affection, as he feels for himself.

It is very probable these Poems may come into the hands of some persons, in whom the sight of the Author's name will awaken a recollection of incidents and scenes, which through length of time they had almost forgotten. They will be reminded of *one*, who was once the companion of their chosen hours, and who set out with them in early life in the paths which lead to literary honours to influence and affluence, with equal prospects of success. But he was suddenly and powerfully withdrawn from those pursuits, and he left them without regret; yet not till he had sufficient opportunity of counting the cost, and of knowing the value of what he gave up. If happiness could have been found in classical attainments, in an elegant taste, in the exertions of wit, fancy, and genius, and in the esteem and converse of such persons, as in these respects were most congenial with himself, he would have been happy. But he was not.—He wondered (as thousands in a similar situation still do) that he should continue dissatisfied, with all the means apparently conducive to satisfaction within his reach.—But in due time the cause of his disappointment was

discovered to him:—He had lived without God in the world. In a memorable hour the wisdom which is from above visited his heart. Then he felt himself a wanderer, and then he found a guide. Upon this change of views, a change of plan and conduct followed of course. When he saw the busy and the gay world in its true light, he left it with as little reluctance as a prisoner, when called to liberty, leaves his dungeon. Not that he became a cynic or an ascetic;—a heart filled with love to God will assuredly breathe benevolence to men. But the turn of his temper inclining him to rural life, he indulged it, and the providence of God evidently preparing his way and marking out his retreat, he retired into the country. By these steps the good hand of God, unknown to me, was providing for me one of the principal blessings of my life; a friend and a counsellor, in whose company for almost seven years, though we were seldom seven successive waking hours separated, I always found new pleasure; a friend who was not only a comfort to myself, but a blessing to the affectionate poor people, among whom I then lived.

Some time after inclination had thus removed him from the hurry and bustle of life, he was still more secluded by a long indisposition, and my pleasure was succeeded by a proportionable degree of anxiety and

concern. But a hope, that the God whom he served would support him under his affliction, and at length vouchsafe him a happy deliverance, never forsook me. The desirable crisis, I trust, is now nearly approaching. The dawn, the presage of returning day, is already arrived. He is again enabled to resume his pen, and some of the first fruits of his recovery are here presented to the public. In his principal subjects the same acumen, which distinguished him in the early period of life, is happily employed in illustrating and enforcing the truths, of which he received such deep and unalterable impressions in his maturer years. His satire, if it may be called so, is benevolent, (like the operations of the skilful and humane surgeon, who wounds only to heal,) dictated by a just regard for the honour of God, and indignant grief excited by the profligacy of the age, and a tender compassion for the souls of men.

His favourite topics are least insisted on in the piece entitled Table Talk; which therefore, with some regard to the prevailing taste, and that those, who are governed by it, may not be discouraged at the very threshold from proceeding farther, is placed first. In most of the large Poems which follow, his leading design is more explicitly avowed and pursued. He aims to communicate his own perceptions of the

truth, beauty, and influence of the religion of the Bible,—a religion, which, however discredited by the misconduct of many, who have not renounced the Christian name, proves itself, when rightly understood, and cordially embraced, to be the grand *desideratum*, which alone can relieve the mind of man from painful and unavoidable anxieties, inspire it with stable peace and solid hope, and furnish those motives and prospects, which in the present state of things, are absolutely necessary to produce a conduct worthy of a rational creature, distinguished by a vastness of capacity, which no assemblage of earthly good can satisfy, and by a principle and pre-intimation of immortality.

At a time when hypothesis and conjecture in philosophy are so justly exploded, and little is considered as deserving the name of knowledge, which will not stand the test of experiment, the very use of the term *experimental*, in religious concernments, is by too many unhappily rejected with disgust. But we well know, that they, who affect to despise the inward feelings which religious persons speak of, and to treat them as enthusiasm and folly, have inward feelings of their own, which, though they would, they cannot suppress. We have been too long in the secret ourselves, to account the proud, the ambitious, or the

voluptuous, happy. We must lose the remembrance of what we once were, before we can believe, that a man is satisfied with himself, merely because he endeavours to appear so. A smile upon his face is often a mask worn occasionally and in company, to prevent, if possible, a suspicion of what at the same time is passing in the heart. We know that there are people, who seldom smile when they are alone, who therefore are glad to hide themselves in a throng from the violence of their own reflections; and who, while by their looks and their language they wish to persuade us they are happy, would be glad to change conditions with a dog. But in defiance of all their efforts they continue to think, forebode, and tremble. This we know, for it has been our own state, and therefore we know how to commiserate it in others.—From this state the Bible relieved us:—When we were led to read it with attention, we found ourselves described.—We learnt the causes of our inquietude,—we were directed to a method of relief,—we tried, and we were not disappointed.

Deus nobis hæc otia fecit.

We are now certain, that the gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. It has reconciled us to God, and to our-

selves, to our duty, and our situation. It is the balm and cordial of the present life, and a sovereign antidote against the fear of death.

Sed hactenus hæc. Some smaller pieces upon less important subjects close the volume. Not one of them, I believe, was written with a view to publication, but I was unwilling they should be omitted.

JOHN NEWTON.

Charles Square, Hoxton,
February 18, 1782.

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THE

POEMS

OF

WILLIAM COWPER, ESQ.

VERSES

WRITTEN AT BATH, ON FINDING THE HEEL OF A SHOE, IN 1748.

FORTUNE! I thank thee: gentle Goddess, thanks!
Not that my Muse, though bashful, shall deny
She would have thank'd thee rather, hadst thou cast
A treasure in her way; for neither meed
Of early breakfast, to dispel the fumes
And bowel-raking pains of emptiness,
Nor noontide feast, nor evening's cool repast,
Hopes she from this, presumptuous—though perhaps
The cobbler, leather-carving artist, might.
Nathless she thanks thee, and accepts thy boon,
Whatever; not as erst the fabled cock,
Vain-glorious fool, unknowing what he found,
Spurn'd the rich gem thou gavest him. Wherefore, ah!
Why not on me that favour, (worthier sure,)
Conferr'dst thou, Goddess? Thou art blind, thou say'st:
Enough!—thy blindness shall excuse the deed.

Nor does my Muse no benefit exhale
From this thy scant indulgence;—even here,
Hints, worthy sage philosophy, are found,
Illustrious hints, to moralize my song.
This ponderous Heel of perforated hide
Compact, with pegs indented many a row,
Haply, (for such its massy form bespeaks,)
The weighty tread of some rude peasant clown
Upbore: on this supported oft he stretch'd,
With uncouth strides, along the furrow'd glebe,
Flattening the stubborn clod, till cruel time
(What will not cruel time?) on a wry step,
Sever'd the strict cohesion; when, alas!
He, who could erst with even equal pace,
Pursue his destin'd way with symmetry
And some proportion form'd, now, on one side,
Curtail'd and maim'd, the sport of vagrant boys,
Cursing his frail supporter, treacherous prop!
With toilsome steps, and difficult, moves on.
Thus fares it oft with other than the feet
Of humble villager:—the statesman thus,
Up the steep road where proud ambition leads,
Aspiring, first uninterrupted winds
His prosperous way; nor fears miscarriage foul,
While policy prevails and friends prove true:
But that support soon failing, by him left
On whom he most depended,—basely left,
Betrayed, deserted,—from his airy height
Headlong he falls, and through the rest of life
Drags the dull load of disappointment on.

AN ODE,

ON READING MR. RICHARDSON'S HISTORY OF SIR CHARLES GRANDISON.

Say, ye apostate and profane,
Wretches who blush not to disdain
Allegiance to your God,—
Did e'er your idly-wasted love
Of virtue for her sake remove
And lift you from the crowd?

Would you the race of glory run,
Know, the devout and they alone,
Are equal to the task:
The labours of the illustrious course
Far other than the unaided force
Of human vigour ask,

To arm against repeated ill
The patient heart too brave to feel
The tortures of despair;
Nor safer yet high-crested Pride,
When wealth flows in with every tide
To gain admittance there.

To rescue from the tyrant's sword
Th' oppress'd;—unseen and unimplored,
To cheer the face of woe;
From lawless insult to defend
An orphan's right, a fallen friend,
And a forgiven foe;

These, these distinguish from the crowd,
And these alone, the great and good,

The guardians of mankind;
Whose bosoms with these virtues heave,
Oh, with what matchless speed, they leave
The multitude behind!

Then ask ye, from what cause on earth
Virtues like these derive their birth?
Deriv'd from Heaven alone,
Full on that favour'd breast they shine,
Where *faith* and *resignation* join
To call the blessing down.

Such is that heart;—but while the Muse
Thy theme, O Richardson, pursues,
Her feebler spirits faint:
She cannot reach, and would not wrong,
That subject for an angel's song,
The hero, and the saint!

IN A LETTER TO C. P. ESQ.

ILL WITH THE RHEUMATISM.

GRANT me the Muse, ye gods! whose humble flight
Seeks not the mountain-top's pernicious height;
Who can the tall Parnassian cliff forsake,
To visit oft the still Lethean lake;
Now her slow pinions brush the silent shore,
Now gently skim the unwrinkled waters o'er,
There dips her downy plumes, thence upward flies,
And sheds soft slumbers on her votary's eyes.

IN A LETTER TO THE SAME.

IN IMITATION OF SHAKESPEARE.

Trust me the meed of praise, dealt thriftily
From the nice scale of judgement, honours more
Than does the lavish and o'erbearing tide
Of profuse courtesy. Not all the gems
Of India's richest soil at random spread
O'er the gay vesture of some glittering dame,
Give such alluring vantage to the person,
As the scant lustre of a few, with choice
And comely guise of ornament disposed.

PSALM CXXXVII.

To Babylon's proud waters brought,
In bondage where we lay,
With tears on Sion's Hill we thought,
And sigh'd our hours away;
Neglected on the willows hung
Our useless harps, while every tongue
Bewail'd the fatal day.

Then did the base insulting foe
Some joyous notes demand,
Such as in Sion used to flow
From Judah's happy band:
Alas! what joyous notes have we,
Our country spoil'd, no longer free,
And in a foreign land!

O Solyma! if e'er thy praise
Be silent in my song,
Rude and unpleasing be the lays,
And artless be my tongue!
Thy name my fancy still employs;
To thee, great fountain of my joys,
My sweetest airs belong.

Remember, Lord! that hostile sound,
When Edom's children cried,
"Razed be her turrets to the ground,
And humbled be her pride!"
Remember, Lord! and let the foe
The terrors of thy vengeance know,
The vengeance they defied!

Thou too, great Babylon, shalt fall
A victim to our God;
Thy monstrous crimes already call
For Heaven's chastising rod.
Happy who shall thy little ones
Relentless dash against the stones,
And spread their limbs abroad.

SONG.

No more shall hapless Celia's ears
Be flatter'd with the cries
Of lovers drown'd in floods of tears,
Or murder'd by her eyes;

No serenades to break her rest,
Nor songs her slumbers to molest,
With my fa, la, la.

The fragrant flowers that once would bloom
And flourish in her hair,
Since she no longer breathes perfume
Their odours to repair,
Must fade, alas! and wither now,
As placed on any common brow,
With my fa, la, la.

Her lip, so winning and so meek,
No longer has its charms;
As well she might by whistling seek
To lure us to her arms;
Affected once, 'tis real now,
As her forsaken gums may show,
With my fa, la, la.

The down that on her chin so smooth
So lovely once appear'd,
That, too, has left her with her youth,
Or sprouts into a beard;
As fields, so green when newly sown,
With stubble stiff are overgrown,
With my fa, la, la.

Then, Celia, leave your apish tricks,
And change your girlish airs,
For ombre, snuff, and politics,
Those joys that suit your years;
No patches can lost youth recall,
Nor whitewash prop a tumbling wall,
With my fa, la, la.

Drayton, March, 1753.

AN ATTEMPT AT THE MANNER OF WALLER.

Did not thy reason and thy sense,
With most persuasive eloquence,
Convince me that obedience due
None may so justly claim as you,
By right of beauty you would be
Mistress o'er my heart and me.

Then fear not I should e'er rebel,
My gentle love! I might as well
A forward peevishness put on,
And quarrel with the mid-day sun;
Or question who gave him a right
To be so fiery and so bright.

Nay, this were less absurd and vain
Than disobedience to thy reign;
His beams are often too severe:
But thou art mild, as thou art fair;
First from necessity we own your sway,
Then scorn our freedom, and by choice obey.

A SONG.

The sparkling eye, the mantling cheek,
The polish'd front, the snowy neck,
How seldom we behold in one!
Glossy locks, and brow serene,
Venus' smiles, Diana's mien,
All meet in you, and you alone.

Beauty, like other powers, maintains
Her empire, and by *union* reigns;
  Each single feature faintly warms:
But where at once we view display'd
Unblemish'd grace, the perfect maid
  Our eyes, our ears, our heart alarms.

So when on earth the god of day
Obliquely sheds his temper'd ray,
  Through convex orbs the beams transmit,
The beams that gently warm'd before,
Collected, gently warm no more,
  But glow with more prevailing heat.

A SONG.

On the green margin of the brook
  Despairing Phyllida reclined,
Whilst every sigh, and every look,
  Declared the anguish of her mind.

Am I less lovely then? (she cries,
  And in the waves her form survey'd;)
Oh yes, I see my languid eyes,
  My faded cheek, my colour fled:
These eyes no more like lightning pierced,
These cheeks grew pale, when Damon first
    His Phillida betray'd.

The rose he in his bosom wore,
  How oft upon my breast was seen!
And when I kiss'd the drooping flower,
  Behold, he cried, it blooms again!

The wreaths that bound my braided hair,
Himself next day was proud to wear
At church, or on the green.

While thus sad Phyllida lamented,
Chance brought unlucky *Thyrsis* on;
Unwillingly the nymph consented,
But Damon first the cheat begun.
She wiped the fallen tears away,
Then sigh'd and blush'd, as who should say
Ah! Thyrsis, I am won.

UPON A VENERABLE RIVAL.

Full thirty frosts since thou wert young
Have chill'd the withered grove,
Thou wretch! and hast thou lived so long,
Nor yet forgot to love?

Ye Sages! spite of your pretences
To wisdom, you must own
Your folly frequently commences
When you acknowledge none.

Not that I deem it weak to love,
Or folly to admire;
But ah! the pangs we lovers prove
Far other years require.

Unheeded on the youthful brow
The beams of Phœbus play;
But unsupported Age stoops low
Beneath the sultry ray.

For once, then, if untutor'd youth,
Youth unapproved by years,
May chance to deviate into truth,
When your experience errs;

For once attempt not to despise
What I esteem a rule:
Who early loves, though young, is wise,—
Who old, though grey, a fool.

ON THE PICTURE OF A SLEEPING CHILD.

FROM THE LATIN OF VINCENT BOURNE.

Sweet babe, whose image here express'd
Does thy peaceful slumbers show;
Guilt or fear, to break thy rest,
Never did thy spirit know.

Soothing slumbers, soft repose,
Such as mock the painter's skill,
Such as innocence bestows,
Harmless infant, lull thee still!

Mortals! around your destined heads
Thick fly the shafts of Death,
And lo! the savage spoiler spreads
A thousand toils beneath.

In vain we trifle with our fate,
Try every art in vain;
At best we but prolong the date,
And lengthen out our pain.

Fondly we think all danger fled,
For Death is ever nigh;
Outstrips our unavailing speed,
Or meets us as we fly.

Thus the wreck'd mariner may strive
Some desert shore to gain,
Secure of life, if he survive
The fury of the main.

But there, to famine doom'd a prey,
Finds the mistaken wretch
He but escaped the troubled sea,
To perish on the beach.

Since then in vain we strive to guard
Our frailty from the foe,
Lord, let me live not unprepared
To meet the fatal blow!

AN EPISTLE TO ROBERT LLOYD, ESQ.

1754.

'Tis not that I design to rob
Thee of thy birthright, gentle Bob,—
For thou art born sole heir and single
Of dear Mat Prior's easy jingle;
Nor that I mean, while thus I knit
My threadbare sentiments together,
To show my genius or my wit,
When God and you know, I have neither;

Or such, as might be better shown
By letting poetry alone.
'Tis not with either of these views,
That I presume to address the Muse:
But to divert a fierce banditti,
(Sworn foes to every thing that's witty,)
That, with a black infernal train,
Make cruel inroads in my brain,
And daily threaten to drive thence
My little garrison of sense:
The fierce banditti which I mean,
Are gloomy thoughts led on by Spleen.
Then there's another reason yet,
Which is, that I may fairly quit
The debt which justly became due
The moment when I heard from you:
And you might grumble, crony mine,
If paid in any other coin;
Since twenty sheets of lead, God knows,
(I would say twenty sheets of prose,)
Can ne'er be deem'd worth half so much
As one of gold, and yours was such.
Thus the preliminaries settled,
I fairly find myself *pitch-kettled*[1];
And cannot see, though few see better,
How I shall hammer out a letter.
First, for a thought—since all agree—
A thought—I have it—let me see—

[1] Pitch-kettled, a favourite phrase at the time when this Epistle was written, expressive of being puzzled, or what in the Spectator's time would have been called *bamboozled*.

HAYLEY.

'Tis gone again—plague on't! I thought
I had it—but I have it not.
Dame Gurton thus and Hodge her son,
That useful thing, her needle, gone,
Rake well the cinders, sweep the floor,
And sift the dust behind the door;
While eager Hodge beholds the prize
In old grimalkin's glaring eyes;
And Gammar finds it on her knees
In every shining straw she sees.
This simile were apt enough,
But I've another, critic-proof.
The virtuoso thus at noon,
Broiling beneath a July sun,
The gilded butterfly pursues
O'er hedge and ditch, through gaps and mews,
And after many a vain essay
To captivate the tempting prey,
Gives him at length the lucky pat,
And has him safe beneath his hat:
Then lifts it gently from the ground;
But ah! 'tis lost as soon as found;
Culprit his liberty regains;
Flits out of sight and mocks his pains.
The sense was dark, 'twas therefore fit
With simile to illustrate it;
But as too much obscures the sight,
As often as too little light,
We have our similes cut short,
For matters of more grave import.
That Matthew's numbers run with ease
Each man of common sense agrees;

All men of common sense allow,
That Robert's lines are easy too;
Where then the preference shall we place,
Or how do justice in this case?
Matthew (says Fame) with endless pains
Smooth'd and refined the meanest strains,
Nor suffer'd one ill-chosen rhyme
To escape him at the idlest time;
And thus o'er all a lustre cast,
That while the language lives shall last.
An't please your ladyship, (quoth I,—
For 'tis my business to reply;)
Sure so much labour, so much toil,
Bespeak at least a stubborn soil.
Theirs be the laurel-wreath decreed,
Who both write well and write full speed;
Who throw their Helicon about
As freely as a conduit spout.
Friend Robert, thus like *chien sçavant*,
Lets fall a poem *en passant*,
Nor needs his genuine ore refine;
'Tis ready polish'd from the mine.

OF HIMSELF.

William was once a bashful youth;
His modesty was such,
That one might say (to say the truth)
He rather had too much.

Some said that it was want of sense,
And others want of spirit,
(So blest a thing is impudence,)
While others could not bear it.

But some a different notion had,
And at each other winking,
Observed, that though he little said,
He paid it off with thinking.

Howe'er, it happen'd, by degrees,
He mended and grew perter;
In company was more at ease,
And dress'd a little smarter;

Nay, now and then would look quite gay,
As other people do;
And sometimes said, or tried to say
A witty thing or so.

He eyed the women, and made free
To comment on their shapes;
So that there was, or seem'd to be,
No fear of a relapse.

The women said, who thought him rough,
But now no longer foolish,
"The creature may do well enough,
But wants a deal of polish."

At length, improved from head to heel,
'Twere scarce too much to say,
No dancing bear was so genteel,
Or half so *dégagé*.

Now that a miracle so strange
May not in vain be shown,
Let the dear maid who wrought the change
E'er claim him for her own.

Cutfield, July, 1752.

AN APOLOGY

FOR NOT SHOWING HER WHAT I HAD WROTE.

Did not my Muse (what can she less?)
Perceive her own unworthiness,
Could she by some well chosen theme,
But hope to merit your esteem,
She would not thus conceal her lays,
Ambitious to deserve your praise.
But should my Delia take offence,
And frown on her impertinence,
In silence, sorrowing and forlorn,
Would the despairing trifler mourn,
Curse her ill-tuned, unpleasing lute,
Then sigh and sit for ever mute.
In secret therefore let her play,
Squandering her idle notes away
In secret as she chants along,
Cheerful and careless in her song;
Nor heeds she whether harsh or clear,
Free from each terror, every fear,
From that, of all most dreaded, free,
The terror of offending *Thee*.

At the same place.

DELIA, the unkindest girl on earth,
When I besought the fair,
That favour of intrinsic worth,
A ringlet of her hair,—

Refused that instant to comply
With my absurd request,
For reasons she could specify,
Some twenty score at least.

Trust me, my dear, however odd
It may appear to say,
I sought it merely to defraud
Thy spoiler of his prey.

Yet when its sister locks shall fade,
As quickly fade they must,
When all their beauties are decay'd,
Their gloss, their colour, lost,—

Ah then! if haply to my share
Some slender pittance fall,
If I but gain one single hair,
Nor age usurp them all;—

When you behold it still as sleek,
As lovely to the view,
As when it left thy snowy neck,—
That Eden where it grew,—

Then shall my Delia's self declare
That I profess'd the truth,
And have preserved my little share
In everlasting youth.

At the same place.

This evening, Delia, you and I
Have managed most delightfully,
  For with a frown we parted;
Having contrived some trifle that
We both may be much troubled at,
  And sadly disconcerted.

Yet well as each perform'd their part,
We might perceive it was but art;
  And that we both intended
To sacrifice a little ease;
For all such petty flaws as these
  Are made but to be mended.

You knew, dissembler! all the while,
How sweet it was to reconcile
  After this heavy pelt;
That we should gain by this allay
When next we met, and laugh away
  The care we never felt.

Happy! when we but seek to endure
A little pain, then find a cure
  By double joy requited;
For friendship, like a severed bone,
Improves and joins a stronger tone
  When aptly reunited.

WRITTEN IN A QUARREL.

(THE DELIVERY OF IT PREVENTED BY A RECONCILIATION.)

THINK, Delia, with what cruel haste
Our fleeting pleasures move,
Nor heedless thus in sorrow waste
The moments due to love;

Be wise, my fair, and gently treat
These few that are our friends;
Think thus abused, what sad regret
Their speedy flight attends!

Sure in those eyes I loved so well,
And wish'd so long to see,
Anger I thought could never dwell,
Or anger aim'd at me.

No bold offence of mine I knew
Should e'er provoke your hate;
And, early taught to think you true,
Still hoped a gentler fate.

With kindness bless the present hour,
Or oh! we meet in vain!
What can we do in absence more
Than suffer and complain?

Fated to ills beyond redress,
We must endure our woe;
The days allow'd us to possess,
'Tis madness to forego.

THE SYMPTOMS OF LOVE.

Would my Delia know if I love, let her take
My last thought at night, and the first when I wake;
With my prayers and best wishes preferr'd for her sake.

Let her guess what I muse on, when rambling alone
I stride o'er the stubble each day with my gun,
Never ready to shoot till the covey is flown.

Let her think what odd whimsies I have in my brain,
When I read one page over and over again,
And discover at last that I read it in vain.

Let her say why so fix'd and so steady my look,
Without ever regarding the person who spoke,
Still affecting to laugh, without hearing the joke.

Or why when with pleasure her praises I hear,
(That sweetest of melody sure to my ear,)
I attend, and at once inattentive appear.

And lastly, when summon'd to drink to my flame,
Let her guess why I never once mention her name,
Though herself and the woman I love are *the same*.

See where the Thames, the purest stream
That wavers to the noon-day beam,
Divides the vale below;
While like a vein of liquid ore
His waves enrich the happy shore,
Still shining as they flow.

Nor yet, my Delia, to the main
Runs the sweet tide without a stain,
  Unsullied as it seems;
The nymphs of many a sable flood
Deform with streaks of oozy mud
  The bosom of the Thames.

Some idle rivulets, that feed
And suckle ev'ry noisome weed,
  A sandy bottom boast;
For ever bright, for ever clear,
The trifling shallow rills appear
  In their own channel lost.

Thus fares it with the human soul,
Where copious floods of passion roll,
  By genuine love supplied;
Fair in itself the current shows,
But ah! a thousand anxious woes
  Pollute the noble tide.

These are emotions known to few;
For where at most a vapoury dew
  Surrounds the tranquil heart,
Then as the triflers never prove
The glad excess of real love,
  They never prove the smart.

O then my life, at last relent!
Though cruel the reproach I sent,
  My sorrow was unfeign'd:
Your passion, had I loved you not,
You might have scorn'd, renounced, forgot,
  And I had ne'er complain'd.

While you indulge a groundless fear,
The imaginary woes you bear
  Are real woes to me:
But thou art kind, and good thou art,
Nor wilt, by wronging thine own heart,
  Unjustly punish me.

How bless'd the youth whom Fate ordains
A kind relief from all his pains,
  In some admired fair;
Whose tenderest wishes find express'd
Their own resemblance in her breast,
  Exactly copied there!

What good soe'er the gods dispense,
The enjoyment of its influence
  Still on her love depends;
Her love the shield that guards his heart,
Or wards the blow, or blunts the dart
  That peevish Fortune sends.

Thus, Delia, while thy love endures,
The flame my happy breast secures
  From Fortune's fickle power;
Change as she list, she may increase,
But not abate my happiness,
  Confirm'd by thee before.

Thus while I share her smiles with thee,
Welcome, my love, shall ever be

The favours she bestows;
Yet not on those I found my bliss,
But in the noble ecstasies
The faithful bosom knows.

And when she prunes her wings for flight,
And flutters nimbly from my sight,
Contented I resign
Whate'er she gave; thy love alone
I can securely call my own,
Happy while that is mine.

Berkhamstead.

Bid adieu, my sad heart, bid adieu to thy peace!
Thy pleasure is past, and thy sorrows increase;
See the shadows of evening how far they extend,
And a long night is coming, that never may end;
For the sun is now set that enliven'd the scene,
And an age must be past e'er it rises again.

Already deprived of its splendour and heat,
I feel thee more slowly, more heavily beat;
Perhaps overstrain'd with the quick pulse of pleasure,
Thou art glad of this respite to beat at thy leisure;
But the sigh of distress shall now weary thee more
Than the flutter and tumult of passiou before.

The heart of a lover is never at rest,
With joy overwhelm'd, or with sorrow oppress'd:
When Delia is near, all is ecstasy then,
And I even forget I must lose her again:
When absent, as wretched as happy before,
Despairing I cry, I shall see her no more!

At Berkhamstead.

WRITTEN AFTER LEAVING HER AT NEW BURNS.

How quick the change from joy to woe!
How chequer'd is our lot below!
Seldom we view the prospect fair,
Dark clouds of sorrow, pain, and care,
(Some pleasing intervals between,)
Scowl over more than half the scene.
Last week with Delia, gentle maid,
Far hence in happier fields I stray'd,
While on her dear enchanting tongue
Soft sounds of grateful welcome hung,
For absence had withheld it long.
"Welcome, my long-lost love, she said,
E'er since our adverse fates decreed
That we must part, and I must mourn
'Till once more bless'd by thy return,
Love, on whose influence I relied
For all the transports I enjoy'd,
Has play'd the cruel tyrant's part
And turn'd tormentor to my heart.
But let me hold thee to my breast,
Dear partner of my joy and rest,
And not a pain, and not a fear,
Or anxious doubt, shall enter there."
Happy, thought I, the favour'd youth,
Bless'd with such undissembled truth!—
Five suns successive rose and set,
And saw no monarch in his state,

Wrapp'd in the blaze of majesty,
So free from every care as I.—
Next day the scene was overcast;
Such day till then I never pass'd,—
For on that day, relentless fate!
Delia and I must separate.
Yet e'er we look'd our last farewell,
From her dear lips this comfort fell:—
"Fear not that time, where'er we rove,
Or absence, shall abate my love."
And can I doubt, my charming maid,
As unsincere what you have said?
Banish'd from thee to what I hate,
Dull neighbours and insipid chat,
No joy to cheer me, none in view,
But the dear hope of meeting you;
And that through passion's optic seen,
With ages interposed between;—
Bless'd with the kind support you give,
'Tis by your promised truth I live;
How deep my woes, how fierce my flame,
You best may tell, who feel the same.

ON HER ENDEAVOURING TO CONCEAL

HER GRIEF AT PARTING.

Ah! wherefore should my weeping maid suppress
Those gentle signs of undissembled woe?
When from soft love proceeds the deep distress,
Ah! why forbid the willing tears to flow?

Since for my sake each dear translucent drop
Breaks forth, best witness of thy truth sincere,
My lips should drink the precious mixture up,
And, ere it falls, receive the trembling tear.

Trust me, these symptoms of thy faithful heart,
In absence shall my dearest hope sustain,
Delia! since such thy sorrow that we part,
Such when we meet thy joy shall be again.

Hard is that heart and unsubdued by love
That feels no pain, nor ever heaves a sigh;
Such hearts the fiercest passions only prove,
Or freeze in cold insensibility.

Oh! then indulge thy grief, nor fear to tell
The gentle source from whence thy sorrows flow;
Nor think it weakness when we love to feel,
Nor think it weakness what we feel to show.

Hope, like the short-lived ray that gleams awhile
Through wintry skies, upon the frozen waste,
Cheers e'en the face of misery to a smile;
But soon the momentary pleasure's past.

How oft, my Delia, since our last farewell,
(Years that have roll'd since that distressful hour,)
Grieved I have said, when most our hopes prevail,
Our promised happiness is least secure.

Oft I have thought the scene of troubles closed,
And hoped once more to gaze upon your charms;
As oft some dire mischance has interposed,
And snatch'd the' expected blessing from my arms.

The seaman thus, his shatter'd vessel lost,
Still vainly strives to shun the threatening death;
And while he thinks to gain the friendly coast,
And drops his feet, and feels the sands beneath,

Borne by the wave steep-sloping from the shore,
Back to the inclement deep, again he beats
The surge aside, and seems to tread secure;
And now the refluent wave his baffled toil defeats.

Had you, my love, forbade me to pursue
My fond attempt, disdainfully retired,
And with proud scorn compell'd me to subdue
The ill-fated passion by yourself inspired;

Then haply to some distant spot removed,
Hopeless to gain, unwilling to molest
With fond entreaties whom I dearly loved,
Despair or absence had redeem'd my rest.

But now, sole partner in my Delia's heart,
Yet doom'd far off in exile to complain,
Eternal absence cannot ease my smart,
And hope subsists but to prolong my pain.

Oh then, kind Heaven, be this my latest breath!
Here end my life, or make it worth my care;
Absence from whom we love is worse than death,
And frustrate hope severer than despair.

R. S. S.

All-worshipp'd Gold! thou mighty mystery!
Say by what name shall I address thee rather,
Our blessing, or our bane? Without thy aid,
The generous pangs of pity but distress

The human heart, that fain would feel the bliss
Of blessing others; and, enslaved by thee,
Far from relieving woes which others feel,
Misers oppress themselves. Our blessing then
With virtue when possess'd; without, our bane.
If in my bosom unperceived there lurk
The deep-sown seeds of avarice or ambition,
Blame me, ye great ones, (for I scorn your censure,)
But let the generous and the good commend me;
That to my Delia I direct them all,
The worthiest object of a virtuous love.
Oh! to some distant scene, a willing exile
From the wild uproar of this busy world,
Were it my fate with Delia to retire;
With her to wander through the sylvan shade,
Each morn, or o'er the moss-imbrowned turf,
Where, bless'd as the prime parents of mankind
In their own Eden, we would envy none;
But, greatly pitying whom the world calls happy,
Gently spin out the silken thread of life;
While from her lips attentive I receive
The tenderest dictates of the purest flame,
And from her eyes (where soft complacence sits
Illumined with the radiant beams of sense,)
Tranquillity beyond a monarch's reach.
Forgive me, Heaven, this only avarice
My soul indulges; I confess the crime,
(If to esteem, to covet such perfection
Be criminal,) Oh grant me Delia! grant me wealth!
Wealth to alleviate, not increase my wants;
And grant me virtue, without which nor wealth
Nor Delia can avail to make me bless'd.

WRITTEN IN A FIT OF ILLNESS.

R. S. S.

In these sad hours, a prey to ceaseless pain,
While feverish pulses leap in every vein,
When each faint breath the last short effort seems
Of life just parting from my feeble limbs;
How wild soe'er my wandering thoughts may be,
Still, gentle Delia, still they turn on thee!
At length if, slumbering to a short repose,
A sweet oblivion frees me from my woes,
Thy form appears, thy footsteps I pursue,
Through springy vales, and meadows wash'd in dew;
Thy arm supports me to the fountain's brink,
Where by some secret power forbid to drink,
Gasping with thirst, I view the tempting flood
That flies my touch, or thickens into mud;
Till thine own hand immerged the goblet dips,
And bears it streaming to my burning lips.
There borne aloft on fancy's wing we fly,
Like souls embodied to their native sky;
Now every rock, each mountain, disappears;
And the round earth an even surface wears;
When lo! the force of some resistless weight
Bears me straight down from that pernicious height;
Parting, in vain our struggling arms we close;
Abhorred forms, dire phantoms interpose;
With trembling voice on thy loved name I call;
And gulfs yawn ready to receive my fall.
From these fallacious visions of distress
I wake; nor are my real sorrows less.

Thy absence, Delia, heightens every ill,
And gives e'en trivial pains the power to kill.
Oh! wert thou near me; yet that wish forbear!
'Twere vain, my love,—'twere vain to wish thee near;
Thy tender heart would heave with anguish too,
And by partaking, but increase my woe.
Alone I'll grieve, till gloomy sorrow past,
Health, like the cheerful day-spring, comes at last,—
Comes fraught with bliss to banish every pain,
Hope, joy, and peace, and Delia in her train!

TO DELIA.

1755.

Me to whatever state the gods assign,
Believe, my love, whatever state be mine,
Ne'er shall my breast one anxious sorrow know,
Ne'er shall my heart confess a real woe,
If to thy share heaven's choicest blessings fall,
As thou hast virtue to deserve them all.
Yet vain, alas! that idle hope would be
That builds on happiness remote from thee.
Oh! may thy charms, whate'er our fate decrees,
Please, as they must, but let them only please—
Not like the sun with equal influence shine,
Nor warm with transport any heart but mine.
Ye who from wealth the ill-grounded title boast
To claim whatever beauty charms you most;
Ye sons of fortune, who consult alone
Her parents' will, regardless of her own,

Know that a love like ours, a generous flame,
No wealth can purchase, and no power reclaim.
The soul's affection can be only given
Free, unextorted, as the grace of heaven.
Is there whose faithful bosom can endure
Pangs fierce as mine, nor ever hope a cure?
Who sighs in absence of the dear-loved maid,
Nor summons once Indifference to his aid?
Who can, like me, the nice resentment prove,
The thousand soft disquietudes of love;
The trivial strifes that cause a real pain;
The real bliss when reconciled again?
Let him alone dispute the real prize,
And read his sentence in my Delia's eyes;
There shall he read all gentleness and truth,
But not himself, the dear distinguish'd youth;
Pity for him perhaps they may express—
Pity, that will but heighten his distress.
But, wretched rival! he must sigh to see
The sprightlier rays of love directed all to me.
And thou, dear antidote of every pain
Which fortune can inflict, or love ordain,
Since early love has taught thee to despise
What the world's worthless votaries only prize,
Believe, my love! no less the generous god
Rules in my breast, his ever blest abode;
There has he driven each gross desire away,
Directing every wish and every thought to thee!
Then can I ever leave my Delia's arms,
A slave, devoted to inferior charms?
Can e'er my soul her reason so disgrace?
For what blest minister of heavenly race
Would quit that Heaven to find a happier place?

ODE.

SUPPOSED TO BE WRITTEN ON THE MARRIAGE OF A FRIEND.

THOU magic lyre whose fascinating sound
Seduced the savage monsters from their cave,
Drew rocks and trees, and forms uncouth around,
And bade wild Hebrus hush his listening wave;
No more thy undulating warblings flow
O'er Thracian wilds of everlasting snow!

Awake to sweeter sounds, thou magic lyre,
And paint a lover's bliss—a lover's pain!
Far nobler triumphs now thy notes inspire,
For see, Eurydice attends thy strain;
Her smile, a prize beyond the conjuror's aim,
Superior to the cancell'd breath of fame.

From her sweet brow to chase the gloom of care,
To check that tear that dims the beaming eye,
To bid her heart the rising sigh forbear,
And flush her orient cheek with brighter joy,
In that dear breast soft sympathy to move,
And touch the springs of rapture and of love.

Ah me! how long bewilder'd and astray,
Lost and benighted, did my footsteps rove,
Till sent by heaven to cheer my pathless ray,
A star arose—the radiant star of love.
The God propitious join'd our willing hands,
And Hymen wreathed us in his rosy bands.

Yet not the beaming eye, or placid brow,
Or golden tresses, hid the subtle dart;
To charms superior far than those I bow,
And nobler worth enslaves my vanquish'd heart;

The beauty, elegance, and grace combined,
Which beam transcendent from that angel mind.

While vulgar passions, meteors of a day,
  Expire before the chilling blasts of age,
Our holy flame with pure and steady ray,
  Its glooms shall brighten, and its pangs assuage;
By Virtue (sacred vestal) fed, shall shine,
And warm our fainting souls with energy divine.

THE FIFTH SATIRE OF THE FIRST BOOK OF HORACE.

PRINTED IN DUNCOMBE'S HORACE.

1759.

A HUMOROUS DESCRIPTION OF THE AUTHOR'S JOURNEY FROM ROME TO BRUNDUSIUM.

'Twas a long journey lay before us.
When I, and honest Heliodorus,
Who far in point of rhetoric
Surpasses every living Greek,
Each leaving our respective home
Together sallied forth from Rome.
  First at Aricia we alight,
And there refresh and pass the night,
Our entertainment rather coarse
Than sumptuous, but I've met with worse.
Thence o'er the causeway soft and fair
To Appiiforum we repair.
But as this road is well supplied
(Temptation strong!) on either side

With inns commodious, snug, and warm,
We split the journey, and perform
In two days' time what's often done
By brisker travellers in one.
Here, rather choosing not to sup
Than with bad water mix my cup,
After a warm debate in spite
Of a provoking appetite,
I sturdily resolved at last
To balk it, and pronounce a fast,
And in a moody humour wait,
While my less dainty comrades bait.
Now o'er the spangled hemisphere
Diffused the starry train appear,
When there arose a desperate brawl;
The slaves and bargemen, one and all,
Rending their throats (have mercy on us!)
As if they were resolved to stun us.
"Steer the barge this way to the shore!
I tell you we'll admit no more!
Plague! will you never be content?"
Thus a whole hour at least is spent,
While they receive the several fares,
And kick the mule into his gears.
Happy, these difficulties past,
Could we have fallen asleep at last!
But, what with humming, croaking, biting,
Gnats, frogs, and all their plagues uniting,
These tuneful natives of the lake
Conspired to keep us broad awake.
Besides, to make the concert full,
Two maudlin wights, exceeding dull,

The bargeman and a passenger,
Each in his turn, essay'd an air
In honour of his absent fair.
At length the passenger, opprest
With wine, left off, and snored the rest.
The weary bargeman too gave o'er,
And hearing his companion snore,
Seized the occasion, fix'd the barge,
Turn'd out his mule to graze at large,
And slept forgetful of his charge.
And now the sun o'er eastern hill,
Discover'd that our barge stood still;
When one, whose anger vex'd him sore,
With malice fraught, leaps quick on shore,
Plucks up a stake, with many a thwack
Assails the mule and driver's back.
Then slowly moving on with pain,
At ten Feronia's stream we gain,
And in her pure and glassy wave
Our hands and faces gladly lave.
Climbing three miles, fair Anxur's height
We reach, with stony quarries white.
While here, as was agreed, we wait,
Till, charged with business of the state,
Mæcenas and Cocceius come,
The messengers of peace from Rome.
My eyes, by watery humours blear
And sore, I with black balsam smear.
At length they join us, and with them
Our worthy friend Fonteius came;
A man of such complete desert,
Antony loved him at his heart.

At Fundi we refused to bait,
And laugh'd at vain Aufidius' state,
A prætor now, a scribe before,
The purple-border'd robe he wore,
His slave the smoking censer bore.
Tired at Muræna's we repose,
At Formia sup at Capito's.
With smiles the rising morn we greet,
At Sinuessa pleased to meet
With Plotius, Varius, and the bard
Whom Mantua first with wonder heard.
The world no purer spirits knows;
For none my heart more warmly glows.
Oh! what embraces we bestow'd,
And with what joy our breasts o'erflow'd!
Sure while my sense is sound and clear,
Long as I live, I shall prefer
A gay, good-natured, easy friend,
To every blessing Heaven can send.
At a small village, the next night,
Near the Vulturnus we alight;
Where, as employ'd on state affairs,
We were supplied by the purveyors
Frankly at once, and without hire,
With food for man and horse, and fire.
Capua next day betimes we reach,
Where Virgil and myself, who each
Labour'd with different maladies,
His such a stomach,—mine such eyes,—
As would not bear strong exercise,
In drowsy mood to sleep resort;
Mæcenas to the tennis-court.

Next at Cocceius' farm we're treated,
Above the Caudian tavern seated;
His kind and hospitable board
With choice of wholesome food was stored.
Now, O ye Nine, inspire my lays!
To nobler themes my fancy raise!
Two combatants, who scorn to yield
The noisy, tongue-disputed field,
Sarmentus and Cicirrus, claim
A poet's tribute to their fame;
Cicirrus of true Oscian breed,
Sarmentus, who was never freed,
But ran away. We don't defame him;
His lady lives, and still may claim him.
Thus dignified, in harder fray
These champions their keen wit display,
And first Sarmentus led the way.
"Thy locks, (quoth he,) so rough and coarse,
Look like the mane of some wild horse."
We laugh: Cicirrus undismay'd—
"Have at you!"—cries, and shakes his head.
"'Tis well (Sarmentus says) you've lost
That horn your forehead once could boast;
Since maim'd and mangled as you are,
You seem to butt." A hideous scar
Improved ('tis true) with double grace
The native horrors of his face.
Well. After much jocosely said
Of his grim front, so fiery red,
(For carbuncles had blotch'd it o'er,
As usual on Campania's shore)

"Give us, (he cried,) since you're so big,
A sample of the Cyclops' jig!
Your shanks methinks no buskins ask,
Nor does your phiz require a mask."
To this Cicirrus. "In return
Of you, Sir, now I fain would learn,
When 'twas, no longer deem'd a slave,
Your chains you to the Lares gave.
For though a scrivener's right you claim,
Your lady's title is the same.
But what could make you run away,
Since, pigmy as you are, each day
A single pound of bread would quite
O'erpower your puny appetite?"
Thus joked the champions, while we laugh'd,
And many a cheerful bumper quaff'd.
To Beneventum next we steer;
Where our good host by over care
In roasting thrushes lean as mice
Had almost fallen a sacrifice.
The kitchen soon was all on fire,
And to the roof the flames aspire.
There might you see each man and master
Striving, amidst this sad disaster,
To save the supper. Then they came
With speed enough to quench the flame.
From hence we first at distant see
The Apulian hills, well known to me,
Parch'd by the sultry western blast;
And which we never should have past,
Had not Trivicus by the way
Received us at the close of day.

But each was forced at entering here
To pay the tribute of a tear,
For more of smoke than fire was seen;
The hearth was piled with logs so green.
From hence in chaises we were carried
Miles twenty-four, and gladly tarried
At a small town, whose name my verse
(So barbarous is it) can't rehearse.
Know it you may by many a sign,
Water is dearer far than wine.
There bread is deem'd such dainty fare,
That every prudent traveller
His wallet loads with many a crust;
For at Canusium, you might just
As well attempt to gnaw a stone
As think to get a morsel down.
That too with scanty streams is fed;
Its founder was brave Diomed.
Good Varius (ah, that friends must part!)
Here left us all with aching heart.
At Rubi we arrived that day,
Well jaded by the length of way,
And sure poor mortals ne'er were wetter.
Next day no weather could be better;
No roads so bad; we scarce could crawl
Along to fishy Barium's wall.
The' Egnatians next, who by the rules
Of common sense are knaves or fools,
Made all our sides with laughter heave,
Since we with them must needs believe,
That incense in their temples burns,
And without fire to ashes turns.

To circumcision's bigots tell
Such tales! for me, I know full well,
That in high heaven, unmoved by care,
The Gods eternal quiet share:
Nor can I deem their spleen the cause
Why fickle nature breaks her laws.
Brundusium last we reach: and there
Stop short the Muse and Traveller.

THE

NINTH SATIRE OF THE FIRST BOOK OF HORACE.

THE DESCRIPTION OF AN IMPERTINENT.

ADAPTED TO THE PRESENT TIMES,

1759.

SAUNTERING along the street one day,
On trifles musing by the way,
Up steps a free familiar wight;
(I scarcely knew the man by sight.)
"Carlos (he cried) your hand, my dear!
Gad, I rejoice to meet you here!
Pray Heaven I see you well!" "So, so;
Even well enough as times now go.
The same good wishes, sir, to you."
Finding he still pursued me close,
"Sir, you have business, I suppose?"
"My business, sir, is quickly done,
'Tis but to make my merit known.
Sir, I have read"—"O learned sir,
You and your learning I revere."

Then, sweating with anxiety,
And sadly longing to get free,
Gods, how I scamper'd, scuffled for't,
Ran, halted, ran again, stopp'd short,
Beckon'd my boy, and pull'd him near,
And whisper'd nothing in his ear.
Teased with his loose unjointed chat,
" What street is this? What house is that?"
O Harlow, how I envied thee
Thy unabash'd effrontery,
Who darest a foe with freedom blame,
And call a coxcomb by his name!
When I return'd him answer none,
Obligingly the fool ran on,
" I see you're dismally distress'd,
Would give the world to be released,
But, by your leave, sir, I shall still
Stick to your skirts, do what you will.
Pray which way does your journey tend?"
" O 'tis a tedious way, my friend,
Across the Thames, the Lord knows where:
I would not trouble you so far."
" Well, I'm at leisure to attend you."
" Are you? (thought I) the De'il befriend you!"
No ass with double panniers rack'd,
Oppress'd, o'erladen, broken-back'd,
E'er look'd a thousandth part so dull
As I, nor half so like a fool.
" Sir, I know little of myself,
(Proceeds the pert conceited elf,)
If Gray or Mason you will deem
Than me more worthy your esteem.

Poems I write by folios,
As fast as other men write prose.
Then I can sing so loud, so clear,
That Beard cannot with me compare.
In dancing too I all surpass,
Not Cooke can move with such a grace."
Here I made shift, with much ado,
To interpose a word or two.—
" Have you no parents, sir, no friends,
Whose welfare on your own depends?"
" Parents, relations, say you? No.
They're all disposed of long ago."—
" Happy to be no more perplex'd!
My fate too threatens, I go next.
Dispatch me, sir, 'tis now too late,
Alas! to struggle with my fate!
Well, I'm convinced my time is come.
When young, a gipsy told my doom;
The beldame shook her palsied head,
As she perused my palm, and said,
" Of poison, pestilence, or war,
Gout, stone, defluxion, or catarrh,
You have no reason to beware.
Beware the coxcomb's idle prate;
Chiefly, my son, beware of that!
Be sure, when you behold him, fly
Out of all earshot, or you die!"

To Rufus' Hall we now draw near,
Where he was summon'd to appear,
Refute the charge the plaintiff brought,
Or suffer judgement by default.

" For Heaven's sake, if you love me, wait
One moment! I'll be with you straight."
Glad of a plausible pretence—
" Sir, I must beg you to dispense
With my attendance in the court.
My legs will surely suffer for't."—
" Nay, prithee, Carlos, stop awhile!"
" Faith, sir, in law I have no skill.
Besides, I have no time to spare,
I must be going, you know where."
" Well, I protest, I'm doubtful now,
Whether to leave my suit or you!"
" Me, without scruple! (I reply)
Me, by all means, sir!"—" No, not I.
Allons, Monsieur!" 'Twere vain (you know)
To strive with a victorious foe.
So I reluctantly obey,
And follow, where he leads the way.
" You and Newcastle are so close;
Still hand and glove, sir, I suppose."
" Newcastle (let me tell you, sir,)
Has not his equal every where."
" Well. There indeed your fortune's made!
Faith, sir, you understand your trade.
Would you but give me your good word!
Just introduce me to my lord.
I should serve charmingly by way
Of second fiddle, as they say:
What think you, sir? 'twere a good jest.
'Slife, we should quickly scout the rest."—
" Sir, you mistake the matter far,
We have no second fiddles there."

" Richer than I some folks may be:
More learned, but it hurts not me.
Friends though he has of different kind,
Each has his proper place assign'd."
" Strange matters these alleged by you!"—
" Strange they may be, but they are true."—
" Well, then, I vow, 'tis mighty clever,
Now I long ten times more than ever
To be advanced extremely near
One of his shining character.
Have but the will—there wants no more,
'Tis plain enough you have the power.
His easy temper (that's the worst)
He knows, and is so shy at first.
But such a cavalier as you—
Lord, sir, you'll quickly bring him to!
Well; if I fail in my design,
Sir, it shall be no fault of mine.
If by the saucy servile tribe
Denied, what think you of a bribe?
Shut out to-day, not die with sorrow,
But try my luck again to-morrow.
Never attempt to visit him
But at the most convenient time,
Attend him on each levee day,
And there my humble duty pay.
Labour, like this, our want supplies;
And they must stoop, who mean to rise."
While thus he wittingly harangued,
For which you'll guess I wish'd him hang'd,
Campley, a friend of mine, came by,
Who knew his humour more than I.

We stop, salute, and—" why so fast,
Friend Carlos? Whither all this haste?"
Fired at the thoughts of a reprieve,
I pinch him, pull him, twitch his sleeve,
Nod, beckon, bite my lips, wink, pout,
Do every thing but speak plain out:
While he, sad dog, from the beginning
Determined to mistake my meaning,
Instead of pitying my curse,
By jeering made it ten times worse.
" Campley, what secret (pray!) was that
You wanted to communicate?"
" I recollect. But 'tis no matter.
Carlos, we'll talk of that hereafter.
E'en let the secret rest. 'Twill tell
Another time, sir, just as well."
Was ever such a dismal day?
Unlucky cur, he steals away,
And leaves me, half bereft of life,
At mercy of the butcher's knife;
When sudden, shouting from afar,
See his antagonist appear!
The bailiff seized him quick as thought.
" Ho, Mr. Scoundrel! Are you caught?
Sir, you are witness to the' arrest."
" Aye, marry, sir, I'll do my best."
The mob huzzas. Away they trudge,
Culprit and all, before the judge.
Meanwhile I luckily enough
(Thanks to Apollo) got clear off.

ADDRESSED TO MISS MACARTNEY,

AFTERWARDS MRS. GREVILLE,

ON READING

THE PRAYER FOR INDIFFERENCE.

1762.

And dwells there in a female heart,
By bounteous heaven design'd
The choicest raptures to impart,
To feel the most refined;

Dwells there a wish in such a breast
Its nature to forego,
To smother in ignoble rest
At once both bliss and woe?

Far be the thought, and far the strain,
Which breathes the low desire,
How sweet soe'er the verse complain,
Though Phœbus string the lyre.

Come then, fair maid, (in nature wise)
Who, knowing them, can tell
From generous sympathy what joys
The glowing bosom swell;

In justice to the various powers
Of pleasing, which you share,
Join me, amid your silent hours,
To form the better prayer.

With lenient balm may *Oberon* hence
To fairy-land be driven,
With ev'ry herb that blunts the sense
Mankind received from heaven.

" Oh! if my Sov'reign Author please,
Far be it from my fate,
To live unblest in torpid ease,
And slumber on in state;

Each tender tie of life defied,
Whence social pleasures spring;
Unmoved with all the world beside,
A solitary thing."

Some Alpine mountain wrapt in snow,
Thus braves the whirling blast,
Eternal winter doom'd to know,
No genial spring to taste;

In vain warm suns their influence shed,
The zephyrs sport in vain,
He rears unchanged his barren head,
Whilst beauty decks the plain.

What though in scaly armour dress'd,
Indifference may repel
The shafts of woe, in such a breast
No joy can ever dwell.

'Tis woven in the world's great plan,
And fix'd by Heaven's decree,
That all the true delights of man
Should spring from *Sympathy*.

'Tis nature bids, and whilst the laws
Of nature we retain,
Our self-approving bosom draws
A pleasure from its pain.

Thus grief itself has comforts dear,
The sordid never know;
And ecstasy attends the tear,
When virtue bids it flow.

For when it streams from that pure source,
No bribes the heart can win,
To check, or alter from its course
The luxury within.

Peace to the phlegm of sullen elves,
Who, if from labour eased,
Extend no care beyond themselves,
Unpleasing and unpleased.

Let no low thought suggest the prayer!
Oh! grant, kind Heaven, to me,
Long as I draw ethereal air,
Sweet Sensibility!

Where'er the heavenly nymph is seen,
With lustre-beaming eye,
A train, attendant on their queen,
(Her rosy chorus) fly.

The jocund Loves in Hymen's band,
With torches ever bright,
And generous Friendship hand in hand,
With Pity's watery sight.

The gentler Virtues too are join'd,
In youth immortal warm,
The soft relations which combined
Give life her every charm.

The Arts come smiling in the close,
And lend celestial fire;
The marble breathes, the canvass glows,
The Muses sweep the lyre.

"Still may my melting bosom cleave
To sufferings not my own;
And still the sigh responsive heave,
Where'er is heard a groan.

So Pity shall take Virtue's part,
Her natural ally,
And fashioning my soften'd heart,
Prepare it for the sky."

This artless vow may Heaven receive,
And you, fond maid, approve;
So may your guiding angel give
Whate'er you wish or love.

So may the rosy-finger'd hours
Lead on the various year,
And every joy, which now is yours,
Extend a larger sphere.

And suns to come, as round they wheel,
Your golden moments bless,
With all a tender heart can feel,
Or lively fancy guess.

OLNEY HYMNS.

I. WALKING WITH GOD. *Gen.* v. 24.

Oh! for a closer walk with God;
A calm and heavenly frame;
A light to shine upon the road
That leads me to the Lamb!

Where is the blessedness I knew
When first I saw the Lord?
Where is the soul-refreshing view
Of Jesus and his word?

What peaceful hours I once enjoy'd!
How sweet their memory still!
But they have left an aching void,
The world can never fill.

Return, O holy Dove, return,
Sweet messenger of rest!
I hate the sins that made thee mourn,
And drove thee from my breast.

The dearest idol I have known,
Whate'er that idol be,
Help me to tear it from thy throne,
And worship only Thee.

So shall my walk be close with God,
Calm and serene my frame;
So purer light shall mark the road
That leads me to the Lamb.

II. JEHOVAH-JIREH. THE LORD WILL PROVIDE.

Gen. xxii. 14.

The saints should never be dismay'd,
Nor sink in hopeless fear;
For when they least expect his aid,
The Saviour will appear.

This Abraham found: he raised the knife;
God saw, and said, "Forbear!
Yon ram shall yield his meaner life;
Behold the victim there."

Once David seem'd Saul's certain prey;
But hark! the foe's at hand[1];
Saul turns his arms another way,
To save the invaded land.

When Jonah sunk beneath the wave,
He thought to rise no more[2];
But God prepared a fish to save,
And bear him to the shore.

Blest proofs of power and grace divine,
That meet us in his word!
May every deep-felt care of mine
Be trusted with the Lord.

Wait for his seasonable aid,
And though it tarry, wait:
The promise may be long delay'd,
But cannot come too late.

[1] 1 Sam. xxiii. 27. [2] Jonah, i. 17.

III. JEHOVAH-ROPHI. I AM THE LORD THAT HEALETH THEE. *Exod.* xv. 26.

HEAL us, Emmanuel! here we are,
Waiting to feel thy touch:
Deep-wounded souls to thee repair,
And, Saviour, we are such.

Our faith is feeble, we confess,
We faintly trust thy word;
But wilt thou pity us the less?
Be that far from thee, Lord!

Remember him who once applied,
With trembling, for relief;
"Lord, I believe," with tears he cried[3],
"Oh, help my unbelief!"

She too, who touch'd thee in the press,
And healing virtue stole,
Was answer'd, "Daughter, go in peace[4],
Thy faith hath made thee whole."

Conceal'd amid the gathering throng,
She would have shunn'd thy view;
And if her faith was firm and strong,
Had strong misgivings too.

Like her, with hopes and fears we come,
To touch thee, if we may;
Oh! send us not despairing home!
Send none unheal'd away!

[3] Mark, ix. 24. [4] Mark, v. 34.

IV. JEHOVAH-NISSI. THE LORD MY BANNER.

Exod. xvii. 15.

By whom was David taught
To aim the deadly blow,
When he Goliath fought,
And laid the Gittite low?
Nor sword nor spear the stripling took,
But chose a pebble from the brook.

'Twas Israel's God and king
Who sent him to the fight;
Who gave him strength to sling,
And skill to aim aright.
Ye feeble saints, your strength endures,
Because young David's God is yours.

Who order'd Gideon forth,
To storm the invaders' camp,
With arms of little worth,
A pitcher and a lamp[5]?
The trumpets made his coming known,
And all the host was overthrown.

Oh! I have seen the day,
When with a single word,
God helping me to say,
"My trust is in the Lord,"
My soul hath quell'd a thousand foes,
Fearless of all that could oppose.

[5] Judges, vii. 9, and 20.

But unbelief, self-will,
Self-righteousness, and pride,
How often do they steal
My weapon from my side!
Yet David's Lord, and Gideon's friend,
Will help his servant to the end.

V. JEHOVAH-SHALOM. THE LORD SEND PEACE.

Judges, vi. 24.

Jesus! whose blood so freely stream'd
To satisfy the law's demand;
By thee from guilt and wrath redeem'd,
Before the Father's face I stand.

To reconcile offending man,
Make Justice drop her angry rod;
What creature could have form'd the plan,
Or who fulfil it but a God?

No drop remains of all the curse,
For wretches who deserved the whole;
No arrows dipt in wrath to pierce
The guilty, but returning soul.

Peace by such means so dearly bought,
What rebel could have hoped to see?
Peace, by his injured Sovereign wrought,
His Sovereign fasten'd to a tree.

Now, Lord, thy feeble worm prepare!
For strife with earth and hell begins;
Confirm and gird me for the war;
They hate the soul that hates his sins.

Let them in horrid league agree!
They may assault, they may distress;
But cannot quench thy love to me,
Nor rob me of the Lord my peace.

VI. WISDOM. *Prov.* viii. 22—31.

Ere God had built the mountains,
Or raised the fruitful hills;
Before he fill'd the fountains
That feed the running rills;
In me, from everlasting,
The wonderful I AM,
Found pleasures never wasting,
And Wisdom is my name.

When, like a tent to dwell in,
He spread the skies abroad,
And swathed about the swelling
Of Ocean's mighty flood;
He wrought by weight and measure,
And I was with him then:
Myself the Father's pleasure,
And mine, the sons of men.

Thus Wisdom's words discover
Thy glory and thy grace,
Thou everlasting lover
Of our unworthy race!
Thy gracious eye survey'd us
Ere stars were seen above;
In wisdom thou hast made us,
And died for us in love.

And couldst thou be delighted
With creatures such as we,
Who, when we saw thee, slighted,
And nail'd thee to a tree?
Unfathomable wonder,
And mystery divine!
The voice that speaks in thunder,
Says, "Sinner, I am thine!"

VII. VANITY OF THE WORLD.

God gives his mercies to be spent;
Your hoard will do your soul no good;
Gold is a blessing only lent,
Repaid by giving others food.

The world's esteem is but a bribe,
To buy their peace you sell your own;
The slave of a vainglorious tribe,
Who hate you while they make you known.

The joy that vain amusements give,
Oh! sad conclusion that it brings!
The honey of a crowded hive,
Defended by a thousand stings.

'Tis thus the world rewards the fools
That live upon her treacherous smiles:
She leads them blindfold by her rules,
And ruins all whom she beguiles.

God knows the thousands who go down
From pleasure into endless woe;
And with a long despairing groan
Blaspheme their Maker as they go.

O fearful thought! be timely wise;
Delight but in a Saviour's charms,
And God shall take you to the skies,
Embraced in everlasting arms.

VIII. O LORD, I WILL PRAISE THEE. *Isaiah*, xii. 1.

I WILL praise thee every day
Now thine anger's turn'd away;
Comfortable thoughts arise
From the bleeding sacrifice.

Here, in the fair gospel-field,
Wells of free salvation yield
Streams of life, a plenteous store,
And my soul shall thirst no more.

Jesus is become at length
My salvation and my strength;
And his praises shall prolong,
While I live, my pleasant song.

Praise ye, then, his glorious name,
Publish his exalted fame!
Still his worth your praise exceeds;
Excellent are all his deeds.

Raise again the joyful sound,
Let the nations roll it round!
Zion, shout! for this is he;
God the Saviour dwells in thee!

IX. THE CONTRITE HEART. *Isaiah*, lvii. 15.

THE Lord will happiness divine
On contrite hearts bestow;
Then tell me, gracious God, is mine
A contrite heart, or no?

I hear, but seem to hear in vain,
Insensible as steel;
If ought is felt, 'tis only pain,
To find I cannot feel.

I sometimes think myself inclined
To love thee, if I could;
But often feel another mind,
Averse to all that's good.

My best desires are faint and few,
I fain would strive for more;
But when I cry, "My strength renew!"
Seem weaker than before.

Thy saints are comforted, I know,
And love thy house of prayer;
I therefore go where others go,
But find no comfort there.

O make this heart rejoice or ache;
Decide this doubt for me;
And if it be not broken, break,—
And heal it if it be!

X. THE FUTURE PEACE AND GLORY OF THE CHURCH. *Isaiah*, ix. 15—20.

HEAR what God the Lord hath spoken,
"O my people, faint and few,
Comfortless, afflicted, broken,
Fair abodes I build for you.
Thorns of heart-felt tribulation
Shall no more perplex your ways:
You shall name your walls, Salvation,
And your gates shall all be Praise.

"There, like streams that feed the garden,
Pleasures without end shall flow;
For the Lord, your faith rewarding,
All his bounty shall bestow;
Still in undisturb'd possession
Peace and righteousness shall reign;
Never shall you feel oppression,
Hear the voice of war again.

"Ye no more your suns descending,
Waning moons no more shall see;
But, your griefs for ever ending,
Find eternal noon in me:
God shall rise, and shining o'er ye,
Change to day the gloom of night;
He, the Lord, shall be your glory,
God your everlasting light."

XI. JEHOVAH OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. *Jer.* xxiii. 6.

My God, how perfect are thy ways!
But mine polluted are;
Sin twines itself about my praise,
And slides into my prayer.

When I would speak what thou hast done
To save me from my sin,
I cannot make thy mercies known,
But self-applause creeps in.

Divine desire, that holy flame
Thy grace creates in me;
Alas! impatience is its name,
When it returns to thee.

This heart, a fountain of vile thoughts,
How does it overflow,
While self upon the surface floats,
Still bubbling from below.

Let others in the gaudy dress
Of fancied merit shine;
The Lord shall be my righteousness,
The Lord for ever mine.

XII. EPHRAIM REPENTING. *Jer.* xxxi. 18—20.

My God, till I received thy stroke,
How like a beast was I!
So unaccustom'd to the yoke,
So backward to comply.

With grief my just reproach I bear;
Shame fills me at the thought,
How frequent my rebellions were,
What wickedness I wrought.

Thy merciful restraint I scorn'd,
And left the pleasant road;
Yet turn me, and I shall be turn'd!
Thou art the Lord my God.

"Is Ephraim banish'd from my thoughts,
Or vile in my esteem?
No," saith the Lord, "with all his faults,
I still remember him.

"Is he a dear and pleasant child?
Yes, dear and pleasant still;
Though sin his foolish heart beguiled,
And he withstood my will.

"My sharp rebuke has laid him low,
He seeks my face again;
My pity kindles at his woe,
He shall not seek in vain."

XIII. THE COVENANT. *Ezek.* xxxvi. 25—28.

The Lord proclaims his grace abroad!
"Behold, I change your hearts of stone;
Each shall renounce his idol-god,
And serve, henceforth, the Lord alone.

My grace, a flowing stream, proceeds
To wash your filthiness away;
Ye shall abhor your former deeds,
And learn my statutes to obey.

My truth the great design ensures,
I give myself away to you;
You shall be mine, I will be yours,
Your God unalterably true.

Yet not unsought, or unimplored,
The plenteous grace shall I confer[6];
No—your whole hearts shall seek the Lord,
I'll put a praying spirit there.

From the first breath of life divine,
Down to the last expiring hour,
The gracious work shall all be mine,
Begun and ended in my power.

XIV. JEHOVAH-SHAMMAH. *Ezek.* xlviii. 35.

As birds their infant brood protect[7],
And spread their wings to shelter them,
Thus saith the Lord to his elect,
So will I guard Jerusalem.

And what then is Jerusalem,
This darling object of his care?
Where is its worth in God's esteem?
Who built it? who inhabits there?

Jehovah founded it in blood,
The blood of his incarnate Son;
There dwell the saints, once foes to God,
The sinners whom he calls his own.

[6] Verse 37. [7] Isaiah, xxxi. 5.

There, though besieged on every side,
Yet much beloved, and guarded well,
From age to age they have defied
The utmost force of earth and hell.

Let earth repent, and hell despair,
This city has a sure defence;
Her name is call'd, "The Lord is there,"
And who has power to drive him thence?

XV. PRAISE FOR THE FOUNTAIN OPENED.

Zech. xiii. 1.

THERE is a fountain fill'd with blood
Drawn from Emmanuel's veins;
And sinners, plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.

The dying thief rejoiced to see
That fountain in his day;
And there have I, as vile as he,
Wash'd all my sins away.

Dear dying Lamb, thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransom'd church of God
Be saved, to sin no more.

E'er since, by faith, I saw the stream
Thy flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme,
And shall be till I die.

Then in a nobler, sweeter song,
I'll sing thy power to save;
When this poor lisping stammering tongue
Lies silent in the grave.

Lord, I believe thou hast prepared
(Unworthy though I be)
For me a blood-bought free reward,
A golden harp for me!

'Tis strung and tuned for endless years,
And form'd by power divine,
To sound in God the Father's ears
No other name but thine.

XVI. THE SOWER. *Matt.* xiii. 3.

Ye sons of earth, prepare the plough,
Break up your fallow ground;
The sower is gone forth to sow,
And scatter blessings round.

The seed that finds a stony soil
Shoots forth a hasty blade;
But ill repays the sower's toil,
Soon wither'd, scorch'd, and dead.

The thorny ground is sure to baulk
All hopes of harvest there;
We find a tall and sickly stalk,
But not the fruitful ear.

The beaten path and highway side
Receive the trust in vain;
The watchful birds the spoil divide,
And pick up all the grain.

But where the Lord of grace and power
Has bless'd the happy field,
How plenteous is the golden store
The deep-wrought furrows yield!

Father of mercies, we have need
Of thy preparing grace;
Let the same hand that gives the seed
Provide a fruitful place!

XVII. THE HOUSE OF PRAYER. *Mark*, xi. 17.

Thy mansion is the Christian's heart,
O Lord, thy dwelling-place secure!
Bid the unruly throng depart,
And leave the consecrated door.

Devoted as it is to thee,
A thievish swarm frequents the place:
They steal away my joys from me,
And rob my Saviour of his praise.

There, too, a sharp designing trade
Sin, Satan, and the World maintain:
Nor cease to press me, and persuade
To part with ease, and purchase pain.

I know them, and I hate their din;
Am weary of the bustling crowd;
But while their voice is heard within,
I cannot serve thee as I would.

Oh! for the joy thy presence gives,
What peace shall reign when thou art there!
Thy presence makes this den of thieves
A calm delightful house of prayer.

And if thou make thy temple shine,
Yet, self-abased, will I adore;
The gold and silver are not mine;
I give thee what was thine before.

XVIII. LOVEST THOU ME? *John*, xxi. 16.

HARK, my soul! it is the Lord;
'Tis thy Saviour, hear his word;
Jesus speaks, and speaks to thee,
"Say, poor sinner, lovest thou me?

"I deliver'd thee when bound,
And when bleeding, heal'd thy wound:
Sought thee wandering, set thee right,
Turn'd thy darkness into light.

"Can a woman's tender care
Cease towards the child she bare?
Yes, she may forgetful be,
Yet will I remember thee.

"Mine is an unchanging love,
Higher than the heights above,
Deeper than the depths beneath,
Free and faithful, strong as death.

"Thou shalt see my glory soon,
When the work of grace is done;
Partner of my throne shalt be;—
Say, poor sinner, lovest thou me?"

Lord, it is my chief complaint,
That my love is weak and faint;
Yet I love thee and adore,—
Oh! for grace to love thee more!

XIX. CONTENTMENT. *Phil.* iv. 11.

Fierce passions discompose the mind,
As tempests vex the sea;
But calm content and peace we find,
When, Lord, we turn to thee.

In vain by reason and by rule
We try to bend the will;
For none but in the Saviour's school
Can learn the heavenly skill.

Since at his feet my soul has sate,
His gracious words to hear,
Contented with my present state,
I cast on him my care.

"Art thou a sinner, soul?" he said,
"Then how canst thou complain?
How light thy troubles here, if weigh'd
With everlasting pain!

"If thou of murmuring wouldst be cured,
Compare thy griefs with mine;
Think what my love for thee endured,
And thou wilt not repine.

"'Tis I appoint thy daily lot,
And I do all things well;
Thou soon shalt leave this wretched spot,
And rise with me to dwell.

"In life my grace shall strength supply,
Proportion'd to thy day;
At death thou still shalt find me nigh,
To wipe thy tears away."

Thus I, who once my wretched days
In vain repinings spent,
Taught in my Saviour's school of grace,
Have learnt to be content.

XX. OLD TESTAMENT GOSPEL. *Heb.* iv. 2.

Israel in ancient days
Not only had a view
Of Sinai in a blaze,
But learn'd the Gospel too;
The types and figures were a glass,
In which they saw a Saviour's face.

The paschal sacrifice
And blood-besprinkled door[8],
Seen with enlighten'd eyes,
And once applied with power,
Would teach the need of other blood,
To reconcile an angry God.

The Lamb, the Dove, set forth
His perfect innocence[9],
Whose blood of matchless worth
Should be the soul's defence;
For he who can for sin atone,
Must have no failings of his own.

The scape-goat on his head[10]
The people's trespass bore,
And to the desert led,
Was to be seen no more:

[8] Exod. xii. 13. [9] Lev. xii. 6. [10] Lev. xvi. 21.

In him our Surety seem'd to say,
"Behold, I bear your sins away."

Dipt in his fellow's blood,
The living bird went free[11];
The type, well understood,
Express'd the sinner's plea;
Described a guilty soul enlarged,
And by a Saviour's death discharged.

Jesus, I love to trace,
Throughout the sacred page,
The footsteps of thy grace,
The same in every age!
O grant that I may faithful be
To clearer light vouchsafed to me!

XXI. SARDIS. *Rev.* iii. 1—6.

"WRITE to Sardis," saith the Lord,
"And write what he declares,
He whose Spirit, and whose word,
Upholds the seven stars:
All thy works and ways I search,
Find thy zeal and love decay'd;
Thou art call'd a living church,
But thou art cold and dead.

"Watch, remember, seek, and strive,
Exert thy former pains;
Let thy timely care revive,
And strengthen what remains;

[11] Lev. xiv. 51—53.

Cleanse thine heart, thy works amend,
Former times to mind recall,
Lest my sudden stroke descend,
And smite thee once for all.

"Yet I number now in thee
A few that are upright;
These my Father's face shall see.
And walk with me in white.
When in judgement I appear,
They for mine shall be confest;
Let my faithful servants hear,—
And woe be to the rest!"

XXII. PRAYER FOR A BLESSING.

Bestow, dear Lord, upon our youth,
The gift of saving grace;
And let the seed of sacred truth
Fall in a fruitful place.

Grace is a plant, where'er it grows,
Of pure and heavenly root;
But fairest in the youngest shows,
And yields the sweetest fruit.

Ye careless ones, O hear betimes
The voice of sovereign love!
Your youth is stain'd with many crimes,
But mercy reigns above.

True, you are young, but there's a stone
Within the youngest breast;
Or half the crimes which you have done
Would rob you of your rest.

For you the public prayer is made;
Oh! join the public prayer!
For you the secret tear is shed;
O shed yourselves a tear!

We pray that you may early prove
The Spirit's power to teach;
You cannot be too young to love
That Jesus whom we preach.

XXIII. PLEADING FOR AND WITH YOUTH.

Sin has undone our wretched race;
But Jesus has restored,
And brought the sinner face to face
With his forgiving Lord.

This we repeat from year to year,
And press upon our youth;
Lord, give them an attentive ear,
Lord, save them by thy truth!

Blessings upon the rising race!
Make this a happy hour,
According to thy richest grace,
And thine almighty power.

We feel for your unhappy state,
(May you regard it too.)
And would awhile ourselves forget
To pour out prayer for you.

We see, though you perceive it not,
The approaching aweful doom;
O tremble at the solemn thought
And flee the wrath to come!

Dear Saviour, let this new-born year
Spread an alarm abroad;
And cry in every careless ear,
"Prepare to meet thy God!"

XXIV. PRAYER FOR CHILDREN.

Gracious Lord, our children see,
By thy mercy we are free;
But shall these, alas! remain
Subjects still of Satan's reign?
Israel's young ones, when of old
Pharaoh threaten'd to withhold[12],
Then thy messenger said, "No;
Let the children also go!"

When the angel of the Lord,
Drawing forth his dreadful sword,
Slew with an avenging hand,
All the first-born of the land[13];
Then thy people's doors he pass'd,
Where the bloody sign was placed:
Hear us, now, upon our knees,
Plead the blood of Christ for these!

Lord, we tremble, for we know
How the fierce malicious foe,
Wheeling round his watchful flight,
Keeps them ever in his sight:
Spread thy pinions, King of kings!
Hide them safe beneath thy wings;
Lest the ravenous bird of prey
Stoop, and bear the brood away.

[12] Exod. x. 9. [13] Exod. xii. 12.

XXV. JEHOVAH JESUS.

My song shall bless the Lord of all,
My praise shall climb to his abode;
Thee, Saviour, by that name I call,
The great supreme, the mighty God.

Without beginning or decline,
Object of faith and not of sense;
Eternal ages saw him shine,
He shines eternal ages hence.

As much, when in the manger laid,
Almighty ruler of the sky,
As when the six days' work he made
Fill'd all the morning stars with joy.

Of all the crowns Jehovah bears,
Salvation is his dearest claim;
That gracious sound well pleased he hears,
And owns Emmanuel for his name.

A cheerful confidence I feel,
My well placed hopes with joy I see;
My bosom glows with heavenly zeal,
To worship him who died for me.

As man, he pities my complaint,
His power and truth are all divine;
He will not fail, he cannot faint;
Salvation's sure, and must be mine.

XXVI. ON OPENING A PLACE FOR SOCIAL PRAYER.

JESUS! where'er thy people meet,
There they behold thy mercy seat;
Where'er they seek thee, Thou art found,
And every place is hallowed ground.

For thou, within no walls confined,
Inhabitest the humble mind;
Such ever bring Thee where they come,
And going, take Thee to their home.

Dear Shepherd of thy chosen few!
Thy former mercies here renew;
Here to our waiting hearts proclaim
The sweetness of thy saving name.

Here may we prove the power of prayer,
To strengthen faith, and sweeten care;
To teach our faint desires to rise,
And bring all heaven before our eyes.

Behold, at thy commanding word
We stretch the curtain and the cord[14];
Come thou, and fill this wider space,
And bless us with a large increase.

Lord, we are few, but thou art near;
Nor short thine arm, nor deaf thine ear:
Oh rend the heavens, come quickly down,
And make a thousand hearts thine own.

[14] Isaiah, liv. 2.

XXVII. WELCOME TO THE TABLE.

This is the feast of heavenly wine,
And God invites to sup;
The juices of the living vine
Were press'd to fill the Cup.

Oh! bless the Saviour, ye that eat,
With royal dainties fed;
Not heaven affords a costlier treat,
For Jesus is the bread.

The vile, the lost, he calls to them;
Ye trembling souls, appear!
The righteous in their own esteem
Have no acceptance here.

Approach, ye poor, nor dare refuse
The banquet spread for you;
Dear Saviour, this is welcome news,
Then I may venture too.

If guilt and sin afford a plea,
And may obtain a place,
Surely the Lord will welcome me,
And I shall see his face.

XXVIII. JESUS HASTING TO SUFFER.

The Saviour, what a noble flame
Was kindled in his breast,
When hasting to Jerusalem,
He marched before the rest!

Good will to men, and zeal for God,
His every thought engross;
He longs to be baptized with blood[15],
He pants to reach the cross!

With all his sufferings full in view,
And woes to us unknown,
Forth to the task his spirit flew;
'Twas love that urged him on.

Lord, we return thee what we can:
Our hearts shall sound abroad,
Salvation to the dying Man,
And to the rising God!

And while thy bleeding glories here
Engage our wondering eyes,
We learn our lighter cross to bear,
And hasten to the skies.

XXIX. EXHORTATION TO PRAYER.

What various hindrances we meet
In coming to a mercy seat!
Yet who that knows the worth of prayer,
But wishes to be often there?

Prayer makes the darken'd cloud withdraw,
Prayer climbs the ladder Jacob saw,
Gives exercise to faith and love,
Brings every blessing from above.

Restraining prayer, we cease to fight;
Prayer makes the Christian's armour bright;
And Satan trembles when he sees
The weakest saint upon his knees.

[15] Luke, xii. 50.

While Moses stood with arms spread wide.
Success was found on Israel's side;
But when through weariness they fail'd,
That moment Amalek prevail'd[16].

Have you no words? Ah! think again.
Words flow apace when you complain,
And fill your fellow creature's ear
With the sad tale of all your care.

Were half the breath thus vainly spent
To Heaven in supplication sent,
Your cheerful song would oftener be,
"Hear what the Lord has done for me."

XXX. THE LIGHT AND GLORY OF THE WORD.

The Spirit breathes upon the word,
And brings the truth to sight;
Precepts and promises afford
A sanctifying light.

A glory gilds the sacred page,
Majestic like the sun;
It gives a light to every age,
It gives, but borrows none.

The hand that gave it still supplies
The gracious light and heat;
His truths upon the nations rise,
They rise, but never set.

Let everlasting thanks be thine,
For such a bright display,
As makes a world of darkness shine
With beams of heavenly day.

[16] Exodus, xvii. 11.

My soul rejoices to pursue
The steps of him I love,
Till glory break upon my view
In brighter worlds above.

XXXI. ON THE DEATH OF A MINISTER.

His master taken from his head,
Elisha saw him go;
And in desponding accents said,
"Ah, what must Israel do?"

But he forgot the Lord who lifts
The beggar to the throne;
Nor knew, that all Elijah's gifts
Would soon be made his own.

What! when a Paul has run his course,
Or when Apollos dies,
Is Israel left without resource,
And have we no supplies?

Yes, while the dear Redeemer lives,
We have a boundless store,
And shall be fed with what he gives,
Who lives for evermore.

XXXII. THE SHINING LIGHT.

My former hopes are fled,
My terror now begins;
I feel, alas! that I am dead
In trespasses and sins.

Ah, whither shall I fly?
I hear the thunder roar;
The Law proclaims Destruction nigh,
And Vengeance at the door.

When I review my ways,
I dread impending doom:
But sure a friendly whisper says,
"Flee from the wrath to come."

I see, or think I see,
A glimmering from afar;
A beam of day, that shines for me,
To save me from despair.

Forerunner of the sun [17],
It marks the pilgrim's way;
I'll gaze upon it while I run,
And watch the rising day.

XXXIII. THE WAITING SOUL [18].

Breathe from the gentle south, O Lord,
And cheer me from the north;
Blow on the treasures of thy word,
And call the spices forth!

I wish, Thou know'st, to be resign'd,
And wait with patient hope;
But hope delayed fatigues the mind,
And drinks the spirits up.

[17] Psalm cxxx. 6.

[18] This Hymn, which has not been marked as Cowper's in the Olney Collection, and consequently not included in any edition of his works, is here restored to him on the authority of Mrs. Johnson, the widow of his excellent kinsman.

Help me to reach the distant goal;
Confirm my feeble knee;
Pity the sickness of a soul
That faints for love of thee!

Cold as I feel this heart of mine,
Yet, since I feel it so,
It yields some hope of life divine
Within, however low.

I seem forsaken and alone,
I hear the lion roar;
And every door is shut but one,
And that is Mercy's door.

There, till the dear Deliverer come,
I'll wait with humble prayer;
And when he calls his exile home,
The Lord shall find him there.

XXXIV. SEEKING THE BELOVED.

To those who know the Lord I speak;
Is my beloved near?
The bridegroom of my soul I seek,
Oh! when will he appear?

Though once a man of grief and shame,
Yet now he fills a throne,
And bears the greatest, sweetest name,
That earth or heaven have known.

Grace flies before, and love attends
His steps where'er he goes;
Though none can see him but his friends,
And they were once his foes.

He speaks;—obedient to his call
Our warm affections move:
Did he but shine alike on all,
Then all alike would love.

Then love in every heart would reign.
And war would cease to roar;
And cruel and blood-thirsty men
Would thirst for blood no more.

Such Jesus is, and such his grace;
Oh, may he shine on you!
And tell him, when you see his face,
I long to see him too[19].

XXXV. LIGHT SHINING OUT OF DARKNESS.

God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never-failing skill,
He treasures up his bright designs,
And works his sovereign will.

Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take,
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head.

[19] Cant. v. 8.

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust him for his grace;
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face.

His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower.

Blind unbelief is sure to err[20],
And scan his work in vain:
God is his own interpreter,
And He will make it plain.

XXXVI. WELCOME CROSS.

'Tis my happiness below
Not to live without the cross,
But the Saviour's power to know,
Sanctifying every loss:
Trials must and will befall;
But with humble faith to see
Love inscribed upon them all,
This is happiness to me.

God in Israel sows the seeds
Of affliction, pain, and toil;
These spring up and choke the weeds
Which would else o'erspread the soil:
Trials make the promise sweet,
Trials give new life to prayer;
Trials bring me to his feet,
Lay me low, and keep me there.

[20] John xiii. 7.

Did I meet no trials here,
No chastisement by the way,
Might I not with reason fear
I should prove a cast-away?
Bastards may escape the rod[21],
Sunk in earthly vain delight;
But the true-born child of God
Must not,—would not, if he might.

XXXVII. AFFLICTIONS SANCTIFIED BY THE WORD.

O how I love thy holy word,
Thy gracious covenant, O Lord!
It guides me in the peaceful way;
I think upon it all the day.

What are the mines of shining wealth,
The strength of youth, the bloom of health!
What are all joys compared with those
Thine everlasting Word bestows!

Long unafflicted, undismay'd,
In pleasure's path secure I stray'd;
Thou madest me feel thy chastening rod[22],
And straight I turn'd unto my God.

What though it pierced my fainting heart,
I bless'd thine hand that caused the smart:
It taught my tears awhile to flow,
But saved me from eternal woe.

Oh! hadst thou left me unchastised,
Thy precepts I had still despised;
And still the snare in secret laid
Had my unwary feet betray'd.

[21] Hebrews xii. 8. [22] Psalm cxix. 71.

I love thee, therefore, O my God,
And breathe towards thy dear abode;
Where, in thy presence fully blest,
Thy chosen saints for ever rest.

XXXVIII. TEMPTATION.

The billows swell, the winds are high,
Clouds overcast my wintry sky;
Out of the depths to thee I call,—
My fears are great, my strength is small.

O Lord, the pilot's part perform,
And guard and guide me through the storm;
Defend me from each threatening ill,
Control the waves,—say, "Peace! be still."

Amidst the roaring of the sea
My soul still hangs her hope on thee;
Thy constant love, thy faithful care,
Is all that saves me from despair.

Dangers of every shape and name
Attend the followers of the Lamb,
Who leave the world's deceitful shore,
And leave it to return no more.

Though tempest-toss'd and half a wreck,
My Saviour through the floods I seek;
Let neither winds nor stormy main
Force back my shatter'd bark again.

XXXIX. LOOKING UPWARDS IN A STORM.

God of my life, to thee I call,
Afflicted at thy feet I fall;
When the great water-floods prevail[23],
Leave not my trembling heart to fail!

Friend of the friendless and the faint,
Where should I lodge my deep complaint,
Where but with Thee, whose open door
Invites the helpless and the poor!

Did ever mourner plead with thee,
And Thou refuse that mourner's plea?
Does not the word still fix'd remain,
That none shall seek thy face in vain?

That were a grief I could not bear,
Didst thou not hear and answer prayer;
But a prayer-hearing answering God
Supports me under every load.

Fair is the lot that's cast for me;
I have an Advocate with thee;
They whom the world caresses most
Have no such privilege to boast.

Poor though I am, despised, forgot[24],
Yet God, my God, forgets me not:
And he is safe, and must succeed,
For whom the Lord vouchsafes to plead.

[23] Psalm lxix. 15. [24] Psalm xl. 17.

XL. THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW OF DEATH.

My soul is sad, and much dismay'd;
See, Lord, what legions of my foes,
With fierce Apollyon at their head,
My heavenly pilgrimage oppose!

See, from the ever burning lake,
How like a smoky cloud they rise!
With horrid blasts my soul they shake,
With storms of blasphemies and lies.

Their fiery arrows reach the mark[25],
My throbbing heart with anguish tear;
Each lights upon a kindred spark,
And finds abundant fuel there.

I hate the thought that wrongs the Lord;
O! I would drive it from my breast,
With thy own sharp two-edged sword,
Far as the east is from the west.

Come then and chase the cruel host,
Heal the deep wounds I have received!
Nor let the powers of darkness boast,
That I am foil'd, and Thou art grieved!

XLI. PEACE AFTER A STORM.

When darkness long has veil'd my mind,
And smiling day once more appears,
Then, my Redeemer, then I find
The folly of my doubts and fears.

[25] Ephes. vi. 16.

Straight I upbraid my wandering heart,
And blush that I should ever be
Thus prone to act so base a part,
Or harbour one hard thought of Thee!

Oh! let me then at length be taught
What I am still so slow to learn,
That God is Love, and changes not,
Nor knows the shadow of a turn.

Sweet truth, and easy to repeat!
But when my faith is sharply tried,
I find myself a learner yet,
Unskilful, weak, and apt to slide.

But, O my Lord, one look from Thee
Subdues the disobedient will,
Drives doubt and discontent away,
And thy rebellious worm is still.

Thou art as ready to forgive
As I am ready to repine;
Thou, therefore, all the praise receive;
Be shame and self-abhorrence mine.

XLII. MOURNING AND LONGING.

The Saviour hides his face!
My spirit thirsts to prove
Renew'd supplies of pardoning grace,
And never-fading love.

The favour'd souls who know
What glories shine in him,
Pant for his presence as the roe
Pants for the living stream.

What trifles tease me now!
They swarm like summer flies;
They cleave to every thing I do,
And swim before my eyes.

How dull the Sabbath day,
Without the Sabbath's Lord!
How toilsome then to sing and pray,
And wait upon the Word!

Of all the truths I hear,
How few delight my taste!
I glean a berry here and there,
But mourn the vintage past.

Yet let me (as I ought)
Still hope to be supplied;
No pleasure else is worth a thought,
Nor shall I be denied.

Though I am but a worm,
Unworthy of his care,
The Lord will my desire perform,
And grant me all my prayer.

XLIII. SELF-ACQUAINTANCE.

Dear Lord! accept a sinful heart,
Which of itself complains,
And mourns, with much and frequent smart,
The evil it contains.

There fiery seeds of anger lurk,
Which often hurt my frame;
And wait but for the tempter's work,
To fan them to a flame.

Legality holds out a bribe
To purchase life from thee;
And Discontent would fain prescribe
How Thou shalt deal with me.

While Unbelief withstands thy grace,
And puts the mercy by;
Presumption, with a brow of brass,
Says, "Give me, or I die!"

How eager are my thoughts to roam
In quest of what they love!
But ah! when duty calls them home,
How heavily they move!

Oh, cleanse me in a Saviour's blood,
Transform me by thy power,
And make me thy beloved abode,
And let me roam no more.

XLIV. PRAYER FOR PATIENCE.

Lord, who hast suffer'd all for me,
My peace and pardon to procure,
The lighter cross I bear for thee,
Help me with patience to endure.

The storm of loud repining hush;
I would in humble silence mourn;
Why should the unburnt, though burning bush,
Be angry as the crackling thorn?

Man should not faint at thy rebuke,
Like Joshua falling on his face[26],
When the cursed thing that Achan took
Brought Israel into just disgrace.

[26] Joshua vii. 10, 11

Perhaps some golden wedge suppress'd,
Some secret sin offends my God;
Perhaps that Babylonish vest,
Self-righteousness, provokes the rod.

Ah! were I buffeted all day,
Mock'd, crown'd with thorns, and spit upon,
I yet should have no right to say,
My great distress is mine alone.

Let me not angrily declare
No pain was ever sharp like mine,
Nor murmur at the cross I bear,
But rather weep, remembering thine.

XLV. SUBMISSION.

O LORD, my best desire fulfill,
And help me to resign
Life, health, and comfort to thy will,
And make thy pleasure mine.

Why should I shrink at thy command,
Whose love forbids my fears?
Or tremble at the gracious hand
That wipes away my tears?

No, rather let me freely yield
What most I prize to thee;
Who never hast a good withheld,
Or wilt withhold, from me.

Thy favour, all my journey through,
Thou art engaged to grant;
What else I want, or think I do,
'Tis better still to want.

Wisdom and mercy guide my way,
Shall I resist them both?
A poor blind creature of a day,
And crush'd before the moth!

But ah! my inward spirit cries,
Still bind me to thy sway;
Else the next cloud that veils the skies
Drives all these thoughts away.

XLVI. THE HAPPY CHANGE.

How bless'd thy creature is, O God,
When with a single eye,
He views the lustre of thy word,
The dayspring from on high!

Through all the storms that veil the skies
And frown on earthly things,
The Sun of Righteousness he eyes,
With healing on his wings.

Struck by that light, the human heart,
A barren soil no more,
Sends the sweet smell of grace abroad,
Where serpents lurk'd before[27].

The soul, a dreary province once
Of Satan's dark domain,
Feels a new empire form'd within,
And owns a heavenly reign.

The glorious orb whose golden beams
The fruitful year control,
Since first obedient to thy word,
He started from the goal,

[27] Isaiah xxxv. 7.

Has cheer'd the nations with the joys
His orient rays impart;
But, Jesus, 'tis thy light alone
Can shine upon the heart.

XLVII. RETIREMENT.

Far from the world, O Lord, I flee,
From strife and tumult far;
From scenes where Satan wages still
His most successful war.

The calm retreat, the silent shade,
With prayer and praise agree;
And seem, by thy sweet bounty made,
For those who follow Thee.

There if thy Spirit touch the soul,
And grace her mean abode,
Oh, with what peace, and joy, and love,
She communes with her God!

There like the nightingale she pours
Her solitary lays;
Nor asks a witness of her song,
Nor thirsts for human praise.

Author and guardian of my life,
Sweet source of light divine,
And,—all harmonious names in one,—
My Saviour! Thou art mine!

What thanks I owe thee, and what love,
A boundless, endless store,
Shall echo through the realms above
When time shall be no more.

XLVIII. THE HIDDEN LIFE.

To tell the Saviour all my wants,
How pleasing is the task!
Nor less to praise him when he grants
Beyond what I can ask.

My labouring spirit vainly seeks
To tell but half the joy,
With how much tenderness he speaks,
And helps me to reply.

Nor were it wise, nor should I choose,
Such secrets to declare;
Like precious wines their taste they lose,
Exposed to open air.

But this with boldness I proclaim,
Nor care if thousands hear,
Sweet is the ointment of his name,
Not life is half so dear.

And can you frown, my former friends,
Who knew what once I was,
And blame the song that thus commends
The Man who bore the cross?

Trust me, I draw the likeness true,
And not as fancy paints;
Such honour may he give to you,
For such have all his saints.

XLIX. JOY AND PEACE IN BELIEVING.

Sometimes a light surprises
The Christian while he sings;
It is the Lord who rises
With healing on his wings:
When comforts are declining,
He grants the soul again
A season of clear shining,
To cheer it after rain.

In holy contemplation
We sweetly then pursue
The theme of God's salvation,
And find it ever new;
Set free from present sorrow,
We cheerfully can say,
E'en let the unknown to-morrow [28]
Bring with it what it may!

It can bring with it nothing,
But He will bear us through;
Who gives the lilies clothing,
Will clothe his people too;
Beneath the spreading heavens
No creature but is fed;
And He who feeds the ravens
Will give his children bread.

Though vine nor fig tree neither [29]
Their wonted fruit shall bear,
Though all the field should wither,
Nor flocks nor herds be there:

[28] Matthew, vi. 34. [29] Habakkuk, iii. 17, 18.

Yet God the same abiding,
His praise shall tune my voice;
For, while in him confiding,
I cannot but rejoice.

L. TRUE PLEASURES.

Lord, my soul with pleasure springs
When Jesus' name I hear;
And when God the Spirit brings
The word of promise near:
Beauties too, in holiness,
Still delighted I perceive;
Nor have words that can express
The joys thy precepts give.

Clothed in sanctity and grace,
How sweet it is to see
Those who love thee as they pass,
Or when they wait on thee.
Pleasant too to sit and tell
What we owe to love divine;
Till our bosoms grateful swell,
And eyes begin to shine.

Those the comforts I possess,
Which God shall still increase,
All his ways are pleasantness[30],
And all his paths are peace.
Nothing Jesus did or spoke,
Henceforth let me ever slight;
For I love his easy yoke[31],
And find his burden light.

[30] Prov. iii. 17. [31] Matt. xi. 30.

LI. THE CHRISTIAN.

Honour and happiness unite
To make the Christian's name a praise;
How fair the scene, how clear the light,
That fills the remnant of his days!

A kingly character he bears,
No change his priestly office knows;
Unfading is the crown he wears,
His joys can never reach a close.

Adorn'd with glory from on high,
Salvation shines upon his face;
His robe is of the ethereal dye,
His steps are dignity and grace.

Inferior honours he disdains,
Nor stoops to take applause from earth;
The King of kings himself maintains
The expenses of his heavenly birth.

The noblest creature seen below,
Ordain'd to fill a throne above;
God gives him all he can bestow,
His kingdom of eternal love!

My soul is ravish'd at the thought!
Methinks from earth I see him rise!
Angels congratulate his lot,
And shout him welcome to the skies!

LII. LIVELY HOPE AND GRACIOUS FEAR.

I WAS a groveling creature once,
And basely cleaved to earth;
I wanted spirit to renounce
The clod that gave me birth.

But God has breathed upon a worm,
And sent me from above
Wings such as clothe an angel's form,
The wings of joy and love.

With these to Pisgah's top I fly,
And there delighted stand,
To view beneath a shining sky
The spacious promised land.

The Lord of all the vast domain
Has promised it to me,
The length and breadth of all the plain
As far as faith can see.

How glorious is my privilege!
To thee for help I call;
I stand upon a mountain's edge,
Oh save me, lest I fall!

Though much exalted in the Lord,
My strength is not my own;
Then let me tremble at his word,
And none shall cast me down.

LIII. FOR THE POOR.

When Hagar found the bottle spent,
And wept o'er Ishmael,
A message from the Lord was sent
To guide her to a well[32].

Should not Elijah's cake and cruse[33]
Convince us at this day,
A gracious God will not refuse
Provisions by the way?

His saints and servants shall be fed,
The promise is secure;
"Bread shall be given them," as he said,
"Their water shall be sure[34]."

Repasts far richer they shall prove,
Than all earth's dainties are;
'Tis sweet to taste a Saviour's love,
Though in the meanest fare.

To Jesus then your trouble bring,
Nor murmur at your lot;
While you are poor and He is king,
You shall not be forgot.

LIV. MY SOUL THIRSTETH FOR GOD.

I thirst, but not as once I did,
The vain delights of earth to share;
Thy wounds, Emmanuel, all forbid
That I should seek my pleasures there.

[32] Gen. xxi. 19. [33] 1 Kings, xvii. 14. [34] Isa. xxxiii. 16.

It was the sight of thy dear cross
First wean'd my soul from earthly things;
And taught me to esteem as dross
The mirth of fools and pomp of kings.

I want that grace that springs from thee,
That quickens all things where it flows,
And makes a wretched thorn like me
Bloom as the myrtle, or the rose.

Dear fountain of delight unknown!
No longer sink below the brim;
But overflow, and pour me down
A living and life-giving stream!

For sure of all the plants that share
The notice of thy Father's eye,
None proves less grateful to his care,
Or yields him meaner fruit than I.

LV. LOVE CONSTRAINING TO OBEDIENCE.

No strength of nature can suffice
To serve the Lord aright:
And what she has she misapplies,
For want of clearer light.

How long beneath the law I lay
In bondage and distress;
I toil'd the precept to obey,
But toil'd without success.

Then, to abstain from outward sin
Was more than I could do;
Now, if I feel its power within,
I feel I hate it too.

Then all my servile works were done
A righteousness to raise;
Now, freely chosen in the Son,
I freely choose his ways.

"What shall I do," was then the word,
"That I may worthier grow?"
"What shall I render to the Lord?"
Is my inquiry now.

To see the law by Christ fulfill'd,
And hear his pardoning voice,
Changes a slave into a child[35],
And duty into choice.

LVI. THE HEART HEALED AND CHANGED BY MERCY.

Sin enslaved me many years,
And led me bound and blind;
Till at length a thousand fears
Came swarming o'er my mind.
"Where," said I, in deep distress,
"Will these sinful pleasures end?
How shall I secure my peace,
And make the Lord my friend?"

Friends and ministers said much
The gospel to enforce;
But my blindness still was such,
I chose a legal course:

[35] Romans, iii. 31.

Much I fasted, watch'd, and strove,
Scarce would show my face abroad,
Fear'd almost to speak or move,
A stranger still to God.

Thus afraid to trust his grace,
Long time did I rebel;
Till despairing of my case,
Down at his feet I fell:
Then my stubborn heart he broke,
And subdued me to his sway;
By a simple word he spoke,
"Thy sins are done away."

LVII. HATRED OF SIN.

Holy Lord God! I love thy truth,
Nor dare thy least commandment slight;
Yet pierced by sin, the serpent's tooth,
I mourn the anguish of the bite.

But though the poison lurks within,
Hope bids me still with patience wait;
Till death shall set me free from sin,
Free from the only thing I hate.

Had I a throne above the rest,
Where angels and archangels dwell,
One sin, unslain, within my breast,
Would make that heaven as dark as hell.

The prisoner sent to breathe fresh air,
And bless'd with liberty again,
Would mourn were he condemn'd to wear
One link of all his former chain.

But, oh! no foe invades the bliss,
When glory crowns the Christian's head;
One view of Jesus as He is
Will strike all sin for ever dead.

LVIII. THE NEW CONVERT.

The new-born child of gospel grace,
Like some fair tree when summer's nigh,
Beneath Emmanuel's shining face
Lifts up his blooming branch on high.

No fears he feels, he sees no foes,
No conflict yet his faith employs,
Nor has he learnt to whom he owes
The strength and peace his soul enjoys.

But sin soon darts its cruel sting,
And comforts sinking day by day,
What seem'd his own, a self-fed spring,
Proves but a brook that glides away.

When Gideon arm'd his numerous host,
The Lord soon made his numbers less;
And said, "Lest Israel vainly boast[36],
'My arm procured me this success.'"

Thus will he bring our spirits down,
And draw our ebbing comforts low,
That saved by grace, but not our own,
We may not claim the praise we owe.

[36] Judges, vii. 2.

LIX. TRUE AND FALSE COMFORTS.

O God, whose favourable eye
  The sin-sick soul revives,
Holy and heavenly is the joy
  Thy shining presence gives.

Not such as hypocrites suppose,
  Who with a graceless heart
Taste not of thee, but drink a dose
  Prepared by Satan's art.

Intoxicating joys are theirs,
  Who while they boast their light,
And seem to soar above the stars,
  Are plunging into night.

Lull'd in a soft and fatal sleep,
  They sin and yet rejoice;
Were they indeed the Saviour's sheep,
  Would they not hear his voice?

Be mine the comforts that reclaim
  The soul from Satan's power;
That make me blush for what I am,
  And hate my sin the more.

'Tis joy enough, my All in All,
  At thy dear feet to lie;
Thou wilt not let me lower fall,
  And none can higher fly.

LX. A LIVING AND A DEAD FAITH.

The Lord receives his highest praise
From humble minds and hearts sincere;
While all the loud professor says
Offends the righteous Judge's ear.

To walk as children of the day,
To mark the precepts' holy light,
To wage the warfare, watch, and pray,
Show who are pleasing in his sight.

Not words alone it cost the Lord,
To purchase pardon for his own;
Nor will a soul by grace restored
Return the Saviour words alone.

With golden bells, the priestly vest,
And rich pomegranates border'd round[37],
The need of holiness express'd,
And call'd for fruit as well as sound.

Easy indeed it were to reach
A mansion in the courts above,
If swelling words and fluent speech
Might serve instead of faith and love.

But none shall gain the blissful place,
Or God's unclouded glory see,
Who talks of free and sovereign grace,
Unless that grace has made him free!

[37] Exod. xxviii. 33.

LXI. ABUSE OF THE GOSPEL.

Too many, Lord, abuse thy grace
  In this licentious day,
And while they boast they see thy face,
  They turn their own away.

Thy book displays a gracious light
  That can the blind restore;
But these are dazzled by the sight,
  And blinded still the more.

The pardon such presume upon,
  They do not beg, but steal;
And when they plead it at thy throne,
  Oh! where's the Spirit's seal?

Was it for this, ye lawless tribe,
  The dear Redeemer bled?
Is this the grace the saints imbibe
  From Christ the living head?

Ah, Lord, we know thy chosen few
  Are fed with heavenly fare;
But these,—the wretched husks they chew,
  Proclaim them what they are.

The liberty our hearts implore
  Is not to live in sin;
But still to wait at Wisdom's door,
  Till Mercy calls us in.

LXII. THE NARROW WAY.

What thousands never knew the road!
What thousands hate it when 'tis known!
None but the chosen tribes of God
Will seek or choose it for their own.

A thousand ways in ruin end,
One only leads to joys on high;
By that my willing steps ascend,
Pleased with a journey to the sky.

No more I ask or hope to find
Delight or happiness below;
Sorrow may well possess the mind
That feeds where thorns and thistles grow.

The joy that fades is not for me,
I seek immortal joys above;
There glory without end shall be
The bright reward of faith and love.

Cleave to the world, ye sordid worms,
Contented lick your native dust!
But God shall fight with all his storms,
Against the idol of your trust.

LXIII. DEPENDENCE.

To keep the lamp alive,
With oil we fill the bowl;
'Tis water makes the willow thrive,
And grace that feeds the soul.

The Lord's unsparing hand
Supplies the living stream;
It is not at our own command,
But still derived from him.

Beware of Peter's word[38],
Nor confidently say,
"I never will deny thee, Lord,"—
But,—"Grant I never may."

Man's wisdom is to seek
His strength in God alone;
And e'en an angel would be weak,
Who trusted in his own.

Retreat beneath his wings,
And in his grace confide!
This more exalts the King of kings[39]
Than all your works beside.

In Jesus is our store,
Grace issues from his throne;
Whoever says, "I want no more,"
Confesses he has none.

LXIV. NOT OF WORKS.

Grace, triumphant in the throne,
Scorns a rival, reigns alone;
Come and bow beneath her sway!
Cast your idol works away!

[38] Matthew, xxvi. 33. [39] John, vi. 29.

Works of man, when made his plea,
Never shall accepted be;
Fruits of pride (vain-glorious worm!)
Are the best he can perform.

Self, the god his soul adores,
Influences all his powers;
Jesus is a slighted name,
Self-advancement all his aim:
But when God the Judge shall come,
To pronounce the final doom,
Then for rocks and hills to hide
All his works and all his pride!

Still the boasting heart replies,
What! the worthy and the wise,
Friends to temperance and peace,
Have not these a righteousness?
Banish every vain pretence
Built on human excellence;
Perish every thing in man,
But the grace that never can.

LXV. PRAISE FOR FAITH.

Of all the gifts thine hand bestows,
Thou Giver of all good!
Not heaven itself a richer knows
Than my Redeemer's blood.

Faith too, the blood-receiving grace,
From the same hand we gain!
Else, sweetly as it suits our case,
That gift had been in vain.

Till thou thy teaching power apply,
Our hearts refuse to see,
And weak, as a distemper'd eye,
Shut out the view of thee.

Blind to the merits of thy Son,
What misery we endure!
Yet fly that hand from which alone
We could expect a cure.

We praise thee, and would praise thee more,
To Thee our all we owe;
The precious Saviour, and the power
That makes Him precious too.

LXVI. GRACE AND PROVIDENCE.

Almighty King! whose wondrous hand
Supports the weight of sea and land;
Whose grace is such a boundless store,
No heart shall break that sighs for more;

Thy providence supplies my food,
And 'tis thy blessing makes it good;
My soul is nourish'd by thy word,
Let soul and body praise the Lord!

My streams of outward comfort came
From him who built this earthly frame;
Whate'er I want his bounty gives,
By whom my soul for ever lives.

Either his hand preserves from pain,
Or, if I feel it, heals again;
From Satan's malice shields my breast,
Or overrules it for the best.

Forgive the song that falls so low
Beneath the gratitude I owe!
It means thy praise, however poor,
An angel's song can do no more.

LXVII. I WILL PRAISE THE LORD AT ALL TIMES.

Winter has a joy for me,
While the Saviour's charms I read,
Lowly, meek, from blemish free,
In the snowdrop's pensive head.

Spring returns, and brings along
Life-invigorating suns:
Hark! the turtle's plaintive song
Seems to speak his dying groans!

Summer has a thousand charms,
All expressive of his worth;
'Tis his sun that lights and warms,
His the air that cools the earth.

What! has autumn left to say
Nothing of a Saviour's grace?
Yes, the beams of milder day
Tell me of his smiling face.

Light appears with early dawn,
While the sun makes haste to rise;
See his bleeding beauties drawn
On the blushes of the skies.

Evening with a silent pace,
Slowly moving in the west,
Shows an emblem of his grace,
Points to an eternal rest.

FRAGMENT OF A HYMN.

To Jesus, the Crown of my Hope,
My soul is in haste to be gone:
O bear me, ye cherubims, up,
And waft me away to his throne!

My Saviour, whom absent I love,
Whom not having seen I adore;
Whose name is exalted above
All glory, dominion, and power.

ANTI-THELYPHTHORA.

A TALE, IN VERSE.

. . . . . *Ah miser,*
Quantâ laboras in Charybdi!
HORACE, lib. i. ode 27.

AIRY del Castro was as bold a knight
As ever earn'd a lady's love in fight.
Many he sought, but one above the rest
His tender heart victoriously impress'd:
In fairy land was born the matchless dame,
The land of dreams, Hypothesis her name.
There fancy nursed her in ideal bowers,
And laid her soft in amaranthine flowers;
Delighted with her babe, the enchantress smiled,
And graced with all her gifts the favourite child.

Her woo'd Sir Airy, by meandering streams,
In daily musings and in nightly dreams;
With all the flowers he found, he wove in haste
Wreaths for her brow, and girdles for her waist;
His time, his talents, and his ceaseless care
All consecrated to adorn the fair;
No pastime but with her he deign'd to take,
And,—if he studied, studied for her sake.
And for Hypothesis was somewhat long,
Nor soft enough to suit a lover's tongue,
He called her Posy, with an amorous art,
And graved it on a gem, and wore it next his heart.

But she, inconstant as the beams that play
On rippling waters in an April day[1],
With many a freakish trick deceived his pains,
To pathless wilds and unfrequented plains
Enticed him from his oaths of knighthood far,
Forgetful of the glorious toils of war.
'Tis thus the tenderness that love inspires
Too oft betrays the votaries of his fires;
Borne far away on elevated wings,
They sport like wanton doves in airy rings,
And laws and duties are neglected things.

Nor he alone address'd the wayward fair;
Full many a knight had been entangled there.
But still, whoever woo'd her or embraced,
On every mind some mighty spell she cast.

[1] This couplet seems to have been suggested by those lines in Virgil, which Cowper soon afterwards placed as a motto in the title-page of his first volume. And this, with a few slighter coincidences, might have led to the discovery of the author when that volume came out.

Some she would teach (for she was wondrous wise,
And made her dupes see all things with her eyes,)
That forms material, whatsoe'er we dream,
Are not at all, or are not what they seem;
That substances and modes of every kind
Are mere impressions on the passive mind;
And he that splits his cranium, breaks at most
A fancied head against a fancied post:
Others, that earth, ere sin had drown'd it all,
Was smooth and even as an ivory ball;
That all the various beauties we survey,
Hills, valleys, rivers, and the boundless sea,
Are but departures from the first design,
Effects of punishment and wrath divine.
She tutor'd some in Dædalus's art,
And promised they should act his wildgoose part,
On waxen pinions soar without a fall,
Swift as the proudest gander of them all.

But fate reserved Sir Airy to maintain
The wildest project of her teeming brain;
That wedlock is not rigorous as supposed,
But man, within a wider pale enclosed,
May rove at will, where appetite shall lead,
Free as the lordly bull that ranges o'er the mead;
That forms and rites are tricks of human law,
As idle as the chattering of a daw;
That lewd incontinence, and lawless rape,
Are marriage in its true and proper shape;
That man by faith and truth is made a slave,
The ring a bauble, and the priest a knave.

Fair fall the deed! the knight exulting cried,
Now is the time to make the maid a bride!

'Twas on the noon of an autumnal day,
October hight, but mild and fair as May;
When scarlet fruits the russet hedge adorn,
And floating films envelope every thorn;
When gently as in June, the rivers glide,
And only miss the flowers that graced their side;
The linnet twitter'd out his parting song,
With many a chorister the woods among;
On southern banks the ruminating sheep,
Lay snug and warm;—'twas summer's farewell peep.
Propitious to his fond intent there grew
An arbour near at hand of thickest yew,
With many a boxen bush, close clipt between,
And philyrea of a gilded green.

But what old Chaucer's merry page befits,
The chaster muse of modern days omits.
Suffice it then in decent terms to say,
She saw,—and turn'd her rosy cheek away.
Small need of prayer-book or of priest, I ween,
Where parties are agreed, retired the scene,
Occasion prompt, and appetite so keen.
Hypothesis (for with such magic power
Fancy endued her in her natal hour,)
From many a steaming lake and reeking bog,
Bade rise in haste a dank and drizzling fog,
That curtain'd round the scene where they reposed,
And wood and lawn in dusky folds enclosed.

Fear seized the trembling sex; in every grove
They wept the wrongs of honourable love.
In vain, they cried, are hymeneal rites,
Vain our delusive hope of constant knights;

The marriage bond has lost its power to bind,
And flutters loose, the sport of every wind.
The bride, while yet her bride's attire is on,
Shall mourn her absent lord, for he is gone,
Satiate of her, and weary of the same,
To distant wilds in quest of other game.
Ye fair Circassians! all your lutes employ,
Seraglios sing, and harams dance for joy!
For British nymphs whose lords were lately true,
Nymphs quite as fair, and happier once than you,
Honour, esteem, and confidence forgot,
Feel all the meanness of your slavish lot.
Oh curst Hypothesis! your hellish arts
Seduce our husbands, and estrange their hearts.—
Will none arise? no knight who still retains
The blood of ancient worthies in his veins,
To assert the charter of the chaste and fair,
Find out her treacherous heart, and plant a dagger there!
A knight—(can he that serves the fair do less)
Starts at the call of beauty in distress;
And he that does not, whatsoe'er occurs,
Is recreant, and unworthy of his spurs[2].

Full many a champion, bent on hardy deed[3],
Call'd for his arms and for his princely steed.
So swarm'd the Sabine youth, and grasp'd the shield,
When Roman rapine, by no laws withheld,
Lest Rome should end with her first founders' lives,
Made half their maids, *sans* ceremony, wives.

[2] When a knight was degraded, his spurs were chopped off. C.

[3] Amongst the mightiest, bent on highest deeds.
Par. Lost, vi. 112.

But not the mitred few, the soul their charge,
They left these bodily concerns at large;
Forms or no forms, pluralities or pairs,
Right reverend sirs! was no concern of theirs.
The rest, alert and active as became
A courteous knighthood, caught the generous flame;
One was accoutred when the cry began,
Knight of the Silver Moon, Sir Marmadan[4].
Oft as his patroness, who rules the night,
Hangs out her lamp in yon cærulean height,
His vow was, (and he well perform'd his vow,)
Arm'd at all points, with terror on his brow,
To judge the land, to purge atrocious crimes,
And quell the shapeless monsters of the times.
For cedars famed, fair Lebanon supplied
The well-poised lance that quiver'd at his side;
Truth arm'd it with a point so keen, so just,
No spell or charm was proof against the thrust.
He couch'd it firm upon his puissant thigh[5],
And darting through his helm an eagle's eye[6],
On all the wings of chivalry advanced
To where the fond Sir Airy lay entranced.

[4] Monthly Review for October. C.

[5] . . . . . my almighty arms
Gird on, and sword upon thy puissant thigh.
Par. Lost, vi. 713.

[6] He through the armed files,
Darts his experienced eye.
Par. Lost, i. 569.

This is one of the instances in which Cowper's remembrance of a passage in Milton has betrayed him into an inexact use of a word in it.

He dreamt not of a foe, or if his fear
Foretold one, dreamt not of a foe so near.
Far other dreams his feverish mind employ'd,
Of rights restored, variety enjoy'd;
Of virtue too well fenced to fear a flaw;
Vice passing current by the stamp of law;
Large population on a liberal plan,
And woman trembling at the foot of man;
How simple wedlock fornication works,
And Christians marrying may convert the Turks.

The trumpet now spoke Marmadan at hand,
A trumpet that was heard though all the land.
His high-bred steed expands his nostrils wide,
And snorts aloud to cast the mist aside;
But he, the virtues of his lance to show,
Struck thrice the point upon his saddle bow;
Three sparks ensued that chased it all away,
And set the unseemly pair in open day.
"To horse!" he cried, "or, by this good right hand
And better spear, I smite you where you stand."

Sir Airy, not a whit dismay'd or scared,
Buckled his helm, and to his steed repair'd;
Whose bridle, while he cropp'd the grass below,
Hung not far off upon a myrtle bough.
He mounts at once,—such confidence infused
The insidious witch that had his wits abused;
And she, regardless of her softer kind,
Seized fast the saddle and sprang up behind.
"Oh shame to knighthood!" his assailant cried;
"Oh shame!" ten thousand echoing nymphs replied.
Placed with advantage at his listening ear,
She whisper'd still that he had nought to fear;

That he was cased in such enchanted steel,
So polish'd and compact from head to heel,
" Come ten, come twenty, should an army call
Thee to the field, thou shouldst withstand them all."
" By Dian's beams," Sir Marmadan exclaim'd,
" The guiltiest still are ever least ashamed!
But guard thee well, expect no feign'd attack;
And guard beside the sorceress at thy back!"
He spoke indignant, and his spurs applied,
Though little need, to his good palfrey's side;
The barb sprang forward, and his lord, whose force
Was equal to the swiftness of his horse,
Rush'd with a whirlwind's fury on the foe,
And, Phineas like, transfixed them at a blow.
Then sang the married and the maiden throng,
Love graced the theme, and harmony the song;
The Fauns and Satyrs, a lascivious race,
Shriek'd at the sight, and, conscious, fled the place:
And Hymen, trimming his dim torch anew,
His snowy mantle o'er his shoulders threw;
He turn'd, and view'd it oft on every side,
And reddening with a just and generous pride,
Bless'd the glad beams of that propitious day,
The spot he loath'd so much for ever cleansed away.

TABLE TALK.

Si te fortè meæ gravis uret sarcina chartæ
Abjicito. HOR. lib. i. epis. 13.

A. YOU told me, I remember, glory built
On selfish principles is shame and guilt;
The deeds that men admire as half divine,
Stark naught, because corrupt in their design.
Strange doctrine this! that without scruple tears
The laurel that the very lightning spares,
Brings down the warrior's trophy to the dust,
And eats into his bloody sword like rust.

B. I grant, that men continuing what they are,
Fierce, avaricious, proud, there must be war;
And never meant the rule should be applied
To him that fights with justice on his side.

Let laurels, drench'd in pure Parnassian dews,
Reward his memory, dear to every muse,
Who, with a courage of unshaken root,
In honour's field advancing his firm foot,
Plants it upon the line that justice draws,
And will prevail or perish in her cause.
'Tis to the virtues of such men, man owes
His portion in the good that heaven bestows;
And when recording history displays
Feats of renown, though wrought in ancient days,
Tells of a few stout hearts that fought and died
Where duty placed them, at their country's side,

The man that is not moved[1] with what he reads,
That takes not fire at their heroic deeds,
Unworthy of the blessings of the brave,
Is base in kind, and born to be a slave.
But let eternal infamy pursue
The wretch to nought but his ambition true,
Who, for the sake of filling with one blast
The post-horns of all Europe, lays her waste.
Think yourself station'd on a towering rock,
To see a people scatter'd like a flock,
Some royal mastiff panting at their heels,
With all the savage thirst a tiger feels,
Then view him self-proclaim'd in a gazette,
Chief monster that has plagued the nations yet!
The globe and sceptre in such hands misplaced,
Those ensigns of dominion, how disgraced!
The glass that bids man mark the fleeting hour,
And death's own scythe would better speak his power.
Then grace the bony phantom in their stead
With the king's shoulder knot and gay cockade,
Clothe the twin brethren in each other's dress,
The same their occupation and success.

A. 'Tis your belief the world was made for man;
Kings do but reason on the selfsame plan:
Maintaining your's, you cannot their's condemn,
Who think, or seem to think, man made for them.

B. Seldom, alas! the power of logic reigns
With much sufficiency in royal brains.
Such reasoning falls like an inverted cone,
Wanting its proper base to stand upon.

[1] Perhaps this may have been suggested by Johnson's famous passage concerning Iona.

Man made for kings! those optics are but dim
That tell you so;—say, rather, they for him.
That were indeed a king-ennobling thought,
Could they, or would they, reason as they ought.
The diadem with mighty projects lined,
To catch renown by ruining mankind,
Is worth, with all its gold and glittering store,
Just what the toy will sell for, and no more.

Oh! bright occasions of dispensing good,
How seldom used, how little understood!
To pour in virtue's lap her just reward,
Keep vice restrain'd behind a double guard,
To quell the faction that affronts the throne,
By silent magnanimity alone;
To nurse with tender care the thriving arts,
Watch every beam philosophy imparts;
To give religion her unbridled scope,
Nor judge by statute a believer's hope;
With close fidelity and love unfeign'd,
To keep the matrimonial bond unstain'd;
Covetous only of a virtuous praise,
His life a lesson to the land he sways;
To touch the sword with conscientious awe,
Nor draw it but when duty bids him draw;
To sheath it in the peace-restoring close,
With joy, beyond what victory bestows,—
Blest country! where these kingly glories shine,
Blest England! if this happiness be thine.

A. Guard what you say; the patriotic tribe
Will sneer and charge you with a bribe.—*B.* A bribe?
The worth of his three kingdoms I defy,
To lure me to the baseness of a lie.

And of all lies, (be that one poet's boast,)
The lie that flatters I abhor the most.
Those arts be their's that hate his gentle reign;
But he that loves him has no need to feign.

A. Your smooth eulogium to one crown address'd,
Seems to imply a censure on the rest.

B. Quevedo, as he tells his sober tale,
Ask'd, when in hell, to see the royal jail,
Approved their method in all other things,
"But where, good sir, do you confine your kings?"
"There," said his guide, "the groupe is full in view."
"Indeed!" replied the Don—"there are but few."
His black interpreter the charge disdain'd;—
"Few, fellow? There are all that ever reign'd[2]."

[2] I know not where Cowper found this; but certainly no such "sober tale" would ever have been allowed to pass by the censors of the press in Spain. The following passage may, perhaps, be the original, upon which some imitator or licentious translator has exaggerated.

Ay Reyes en el infierno? le preguntè yo. Y satisfizo à mi duda, diziendo, "Todo el infierno es figuras, y ay muchos de los Gentiles; porque el poder, libertad, y mando les haze sacar à las Virtudes de su medio; y llegan los vicios à su extremo; y viendose en la suma reverencia de sus vasallos, y con la grandeza puestos à Dioses, quieren valer punto menos, y parecerlo, y tienen muchos caminos para condenarse, y muchos que los ayudan. Porque uno se condena por la crueldad, y matando y destruyendo, es una guadaña coronada de vicios, y una peste real de sus Reynos. Y otros se van al infierno por terceras personas, y se condenan por poderes, fiandose de infames Ministros. Y es dolor verlos penar, porque como bozales en trabajos, se los dobla el dolor con qualquier cosa. Los Reyes, como es gente honrada, nunca vienen solos: Aunque Privado y Rey, es mas penitencia que oficio, y mas cargo que gozo; ni ay cosa tan atormentada como la oreja del Principe y del Privado, pues en ellas nunca escapan pretendientes quexosos, y

Wit undistinguishing is apt to strike
The guilty and not guilty, both alike.
I grant the sarcasm is too severe,
And we can readily refute it here,
While Alfred's name, the father of his age,
And the Sixth Edward's grace the historic page.

A. Kings then at last have but the lot of all;
By their own conduct they must stand or fall.

B. True. While they live, the courtly laureate pays
His quit-rent ode, his pepper-corn of praise,
And many a dunce whose fingers itch to write,
Adds, as he can, his tributary mite;
A subject's faults a subject may proclaim,
A monarch's errors are forbidden game.
Thus free from censure (overawed by fear,)
And praised for virtues that they scorn to wear,
The fleeting forms of majesty engage
Respect, while stalking o'er life's narrow stage.
Then leave their crimes for history to scan,
And ask with busy scorn, Was this the man?

I pity kings whom worship waits upon
Obsequious, from the cradle to the throne,
Before whose infant eyes the flatterer bows,
And binds a wreath about their baby brows;
Whom education stiffens into state,
And death awakens from that dream too late.
Oh! if servility, with supple knees,
Whose trade it is to smile, to crouch, to please;

aduladores; y estos tormentos los califican para el descanso. Los malos Reyes se van al infierno por el camino Real, y los mercadores por el de la plata."—*El Alguacil Alguacilado.* Obras de Quevedo, i. 371. Brusseles, 1660. E.

If smooth dissimulation, skill'd to grace
A devil's purpose with an angel's face;
If smiling peeresses and simpering peers,
Encompassing his throne a few short years;
If the gilt carriage and the pamper'd steed,
That wants no driving and disdains the lead;
If guards, mechanically form'd in ranks,
Playing, at beat of drum, their martial pranks;
Shouldering and standing, as if struck to stone,
While condescending majesty looks on;
If monarchy consist in such base things,
Sighing, I say again, I pity kings!

To be suspected, thwarted, and withstood,
Even when he labours for his country's good;
To see a band call'd patriot for no cause,
But that they catch at popular applause,
Careless of all the anxiety he feels,
Hook disappointment on the public wheels,
With all their flippant fluency of tongue,
Most confident, when palpably most wrong,—
If this be kingly, then farewell for me
All kingship, and may I be poor and free!

To be the Table Talk of clubs up stairs,
To which the unwash'd artificer repairs,
To indulge his genius after long fatigue,
By diving into cabinet intrigue,
(For what kings deem a toil, as well they may,
To him is relaxation and mere play;)—
To win no praise when well-wrought plans prevail,
But to be rudely censured when they fail;
To doubt the love his favourites may pretend,
And in reality to find no friend;

If he indulge a cultivated taste,
His galleries with the works of art well graced,
To hear it call'd extravagance and waste;
If these attendants, and if such as these,
Must follow royalty, then welcome ease!
However humble and confined the sphere,
Happy the state that has not these to fear.

A. Thus men, whose thoughts contemplative have dwelt
On situations that they never felt,
Start up sagacious, cover'd with the dust
Of dreaming study and pedantic rust,
And prate and preach about what others prove,
As if the world and they were hand and glove.
Leave kingly backs to cope with kingly cares,
They have their weight to carry, subjects their's;
Poets, of all men, ever least regret
Increasing taxes and the nation's debt.
Could you contrive the payment, and rehearse
The mighty plan, oracular, in verse,
No bard, howe'er majestic, old or new,
Should claim my fix'd attention more than you.

B. Not Brindley nor Bridgewater would essay
To turn the course of Helicon that way;
Nor would the nine consent, the sacred tide
Should purl amidst the traffic of Cheapside,
Or tinkle in 'Change Alley, to amuse
The leathern ears of stock-jobbers and Jews.

A. Vouchsafe, at least, to pitch the key of rhime
To themes more pertinent, if less sublime.
When ministers and ministerial arts,
Patriots who love good places at their hearts,

When admirals extoll'd for standing still,
Or doing nothing with a deal of skill;
Generals who will not conquer when they may,
Firm friends to peace, to pleasure, and good pay,
When freedom wounded almost to despair,
Though discontent alone can find out where,
When themes like these employ the poet's tongue,
I hear,—as mute as if a siren sung.
Or tell me, if you can, what power maintains
A Briton's scorn of arbitrary chains?
That were a theme might animate the dead,
And move the lips of poets cast in lead.

B. The cause, though worth the search, may yet elude
Conjecture and remark, however shrewd.
They take, perhaps, a well-directed aim,
Who seek it in his climate and his frame.
Liberal in all things else, yet nature here
With stern severity deals out the year.
Winter invades the spring, and often pours
A chilling flood on summer's drooping flowers;
Unwelcome vapours quench autumnal beams,
Ungenial blasts attending, curl the streams;
The peasants urge their harvest, ply the fork
With double toil, and shiver at their work.
Thus with a rigour, for his good design'd,
She rears her favourite man of all mankind.
His form robust and of elastic tone,
Proportion'd well, half muscle and half bone,
Supplies with warm activity and force
A mind well lodged, and masculine of course.
Hence liberty, sweet liberty inspires,
And keeps alive his fierce but noble fires.

Patient of constitutional control,
He bears it with meek manliness of soul,
But if authority grow wanton, woe
To him that treads upon his free-born toe!
One step beyond the boundary of the laws
Fires him at once in freedom's glorious cause.
Thus proud prerogative, not much revered,
Is seldom felt, though sometimes seen and heard;
And in his cage, like parrot fine and gay,
Is kept to strut, look big, and talk away.
Born in a climate softer far than our's,
Not form'd like us, with such Herculean powers,
The Frenchman, easy, debonair, and brisk,
Give him his lass, his fiddle, and his frisk,
Is always happy, reign whoever may,
And laughs the sense of misery far away.
He drinks his simple beverage with a gust,
And feasting on an onion and a crust,
We never feel the alacrity and joy
With which he shouts and carols, *Vive le Roy*,
Fill'd with as much true merriment and glee,
As if he heard his king say—Slave, be free!
Thus happiness depends, as nature shows,
Less on exterior things than most suppose.
Vigilant over all that he has made,
Kind Providence attends with gracious aid,
Bids equity throughout his works prevail,
And weighs the nations in an even scale;
He can encourage slavery to a smile,
And fill with discontent a British isle.
A. Freeman and slave then, if the case be such,
Stand on a level,—and you prove too much.

If all men indiscriminately share
His fostering power and tutelary care,
As well be yoked by despotism's hand,
As dwell at large in Britain's charter'd land.

B. No. Freedom has a thousand charms to show,
That slaves, howe'er contented, never know.
The mind attains beneath her happy reign
The growth that nature meant she should attain.
The varied fields of science, ever new,
Opening and wider opening on her view,
She ventures onward with a prosperous force,
While no base fear impedes her in her course.
Religion, richest favour of the skies,
Stands most reveal'd before the freeman's eyes;
No shades of superstition blot the day,
Liberty chases all that gloom away;
The soul, emancipated, unoppress'd,
Free to prove all things, and hold fast the best,
Learns much, and to a thousand listening minds
Communicates with joy the good she finds.
Courage in arms, and ever prompt to show
His manly forehead to the fiercest foe;
Glorious in war, but for the sake of peace,
His spirits rising as his toils increase,
Guards well what arts and industry have won,
And Freedom claims him for her first-born son.
Slaves fight for what were better cast away,
The chain that binds them, and a tyrant's sway;
But they that fight for freedom, undertake
The noblest cause mankind can have at stake,
Religion, virtue, truth, whate'er we call
A blessing, freedom is the pledge of all.

Oh liberty! the prisoner's pleasing dream,
The poet's muse, his passion and his theme,
Genius is thine, and thou art fancy's nurse,
Lost without thee the ennobling powers of verse;
Heroic song from thy free touch acquires
Its clearest tone, the rapture it inspires.
Place me where winter breathes his keenest air,
And I will sing if liberty be there;
And I will sing at liberty's dear feet,
In Afric's torrid clime or India's fiercest heat.

A. Sing where you please, in such a cause I grant
An English poet's privilege to rant.
But is not freedom, at least is not our's,
Too apt to play the wanton with her powers,
Grow freakish, and o'erleaping every mound
Spread anarchy and terror all around?

B. Agreed. But would you sell or slay your horse
For bounding and curvetting in his course;
Or if, when ridden with a careless rein,
He break away, and seek the distant plain?
No. His high mettle, under good control,
Gives him Olympic speed, and shoots him to the goal.

Let discipline employ her wholesome arts;
Let magistrates alert perform their parts,
Not skulk, or put on a prudential mask,
As if their duty were a desperate task;
Let active laws apply the needful curb
To guard the peace that riot would disturb,
And liberty preserved from wild excess,
Shall raise no feuds for armies to suppress.
When tumult lately burst his prison door,
And set Plebeian thousands in a roar,

When he usurp'd authority's just place,
And dared to look his master in the face,
When the rude rabble's watchword was, destroy!
And blazing London seem'd a second Troy,
Liberty blush'd, and hung her drooping head,
Beheld their progress with the deepest dread,
Blush'd that effects like these she should produce,
Worse than the deeds of galley-slaves broke loose.
She loses in such storms her very name,
And fierce licentiousness should bear the blame.
Incomparable gem! thy worth untold,
Cheap, though blood-bought, and thrown away when sold:
May no foes ravish thee, and no false friend
Betray thee, while professing to defend;
Prize it ye ministers, ye monarchs spare,
Ye patriots guard it with a miser's care!

A. Patriots, alas! the few that have been found
Where most they flourish, upon English ground,
The country's need have scantily supplied;
And the last left the scene when Chatham died.

B. Not so—the virtue still adorns our age,
Though the chief actor died upon the stage.
In him, Demosthenes was heard again,
Liberty taught him her Athenian strain;
She cloth'd him with authority and awe,
Spoke from his lips, and in his looks gave law.
His speech, his form, his action, full of grace,
And all his country beaming in his face,
He stood, as some inimitable hand
Would strive to make a Paul or Tully stand.
No sycophant or slave that dared oppose
Her sacred cause, but trembled when he rose,

And every venal stickler for the yoke,
Felt himself crush'd at the first word he spoke.
Such men are raised to station and command,
When Providence means mercy to a land.
He speaks, and they appear; to him they owe
Skill to direct, and strength to strike the blow,
To manage with address, to seize with power
The crisis of a dark decisive hour.
So Gideon earn'd a victory not his own,
Subserviency his praise, and that alone.
Poor England! thou art a devoted deer,
Beset with every ill but that of fear.
The nations hunt; all mark thee for a prey,
They swarm around thee, and thou stand'st at bay,
Undaunted still, though wearied and perplex'd;
Once Chatham saved thee, but who saves thee next?
Alas! the tide of pleasure sweeps along
All that should be the boast of British song.
'Tis not the wreath that once adorn'd thy brow,
The prize of happier times, will serve thee now.
Our ancestry, a gallant christian race,
Patterns of every virtue, every grace,
Confess'd a God; they kneel'd before they fought,
And praised him in the victories he wrought.
Now from the dust of ancient days bring forth
Their sober zeal, integrity, and worth;
Courage, ungraced by these, affronts the skies,
Is but the fire without the sacrifice.
The stream that feeds the well-spring of the heart
Not more invigorates life's noblest part,
Than virtue quickens with a warmth divine
The powers that sin has brought to a decline.

A. The inestimable estimate of Brown,
Rose like a paper-kite, and charm'd the town;
But measures plann'd and executed well,
Shifted the wind that raised it, and it fell.
He trod the very selfsame ground you tread,
And victory refuted all he said.

B. And yet his judgement was not framed amiss,
Its error, if it err'd, was merely this,—
He thought the dying hour already come,
And a complete recovery struck him dumb.

But that effeminacy, folly, lust,
Enervate and enfeeble, and needs must,
And that a nation shamefully debased
Will be despised and trampled on at last,
Unless sweet penitence her powers renew,
Is truth, if history itself be true.
There is a time, and justice marks the date,
For long-forbearing clemency to wait;
That hour elapsed, the incurable revolt
Is punish'd, and down comes the thunder-bolt.
If mercy *then* put by the threat'ning blow,
Must she perform the same kind office *now?*
May she! and if offended heaven be still
Accessible, and prayer prevail, she will.
'Tis not however insolence and noise,
The tempest of tumultuary joys,
Nor is it yet despondence and dismay,
Will win her visits, or engage her stay;
Prayer only, and the penitential tear,
Can call her smiling down, and fix her here.

But when a country—(one that I could name)
In prostitution sinks the sense of shame,

When infamous venality grown bold,
Writes on his bosom, *to be let or sold;*
When perjury, that heaven-defying vice,
Sells oaths by tale, and at the lowest price,
Stamps God's own name upon a lie just made,
To turn a penny in the way of trade;
When avarice starves, and never hides his face,
Two or three millions of the human race,
And not a tongue enquires how, where, or when,
Though conscience will have twinges now and then;
When profanation of the sacred cause
In all its parts, times, ministry, and laws,
Bespeaks a land once christian, fallen and lost
In all that wars against that title most;
What follows next, let cities of great name,
And regions long since desolate proclaim:
Nineveh, Babylon, and ancient Rome,
Speak to the present times and times to come,
They cry aloud in every careless ear,
"Stop, while ye may, suspend your mad career!
O learn from our example and our fate,—
Learn wisdom and repentance ere too late!"

Not only vice disposes and prepares
The mind that slumbers sweetly in her snares,
To stoop to tyranny's usurp'd command,
And bend her polish'd neck beneath his hand,
(A dire effect, by one of nature's laws
Unchangeably connected with its cause,)
But Providence himself will intervene
To throw his dark displeasure o'er the scene.
All are his instruments; each form of war,
What burns at home, or threatens from afar,

Nature in arms, her elements at strife,
The storms that overset the joys of life,
Are but his rods to scourge a guilty land,
And waste it at the bidding of his hand.
He gives the word, and mutiny soon roars
In all her gates, and shakes her distant shores;
The standards of all nations are unfurl'd,
She has one foe, and that one foe, the world.
And if he doom that people with a frown,
And mark them with the seal of wrath, press'd down,
Obduracy takes place; callous and tough,
The reprobated race grows judgement-proof;
Earth shakes beneath them, and heaven roars above.
But nothing scares them from the course they love;
To the lascivious pipe and wanton song,
That charm down fear, they frolic it along,
With mad rapidity and unconcern,
Down to the gulf from which is no return.
They trust in navies, and their navies fail,
God's curse can cast away ten thousand sail;
They trust in armies, and their courage dies;
In wisdom, wealth, in fortune, and in lies;
But all they trust in withers, as it must,
When He commands, in whom they place no trust.
Vengeance at last pours down upon their coast,
A long despised, but now victorious host;
Tyranny sends the chain that must abridge
The noble sweep of all their privilege,
Gives liberty the last, the mortal shock,
Slips the slave's collar on, and snaps the lock.

A. Such lofty strains embellish what you teach,
Mean you to prophesy, or but to preach?

B. I know the mind that feels indeed the fire
The muse imparts, and can command the lyre,
Acts with a force, and kindles with a zeal,
Whate'er the theme, that others never feel.
If human woes her soft attention claim,
A tender sympathy pervades the frame,
She pours a sensibility divine
Along the nerve of every feeling line.
But if a deed not tamely to be borne,
Fire indignation and a sense of scorn,
The strings are swept with such a power, so loud,
The storm of music shakes the astonish'd crowd.
So when remote futurity is brought
Before the keen enquiry of her thought,
A terrible sagacity informs
The poet's heart, he looks to distant storms,
He hears the thunder ere the tempest lowers,
And arm'd with strength surpassing human powers,
Seizes events as yet unknown to man,
And darts his soul into the dawning plan.
Hence, in a Roman mouth, the graceful name
Of prophet and of poet was the same[3];
Hence British poets too the priesthood shared,
And every hallow'd druid was a bard.
But no prophetic fires to me belong,
I play with syllables, and sport in song.

A. At Westminster, where little poets strive
To set a distich upon six and five,

[3] 'Twas certainly prophetic that the name
Of prophet and of poet is the same.
Sir John Denham.

Where discipline helps opening buds of sense,
And makes his pupils proud with silver pence,
I was a poet too;—but modern taste
Is so refined and delicate and chaste,
That verse, whatever fire the fancy warms,
Without a creamy smoothness has no charms.
Thus, all success depending on an ear,
And thinking I might purchase it too dear,
If sentiment were sacrificed to sound,
And truth cut short to make a period round,
I judged a man of sense could scarce do worse
Than caper in the morris-dance of verse.

B. Thus reputation is a spur to wit,
And some wits flag through fear of losing it.
Give me the line that ploughs its stately course
Like a proud swan, conquering the stream by force;
That like some cottage beauty strikes the heart,
Quite unindebted to the tricks of art.
When labour and when dullness, club in hand,
Like the two figures at St. Dunstan's stand,
Beating alternately, in measured time,
The clockwork tintinabulum of rhyme,
Exact and regular the sounds will be,
But such mere quarter-strokes are not for me.

From him who rears a poem lank and long,
To him who strains his all into a song,
Perhaps some bonny Caledonian air,
All birks and braes, though he was never there;
Or having whelp'd a prologue with great pains,
Feels himself spent, and fumbles for his brains;
A prologue interdash'd with many a stroke,
An art contrived to advertise a joke,

So that the jest is clearly to be seen,
Not in the words—but in the gap between;
Manner is all in all, whate'er is writ,
The substitute for genius, sense, and wit.

To dally much with subjects mean and low,
Proves that the mind is weak, or makes it so.
Neglected talents rust into decay,
And every effort ends in push-pin play.
The man that means success, should soar above
A soldier's feather, or a lady's glove,
Else summoning the Muse to such a theme,
The fruit of all her labour is whipt-cream.
As if an eagle flew aloft, and then—
Stoop'd from his highest pitch to pounce a wren.
As if the poet purposing to wed,
Should carve himself a wife in gingerbread.

Ages elapsed ere Homer's lamp appear'd,
And ages ere the Mantuan swan was heard;
To carry nature lengths unknown before,
To give a Milton birth, ask'd ages more.
Thus genius rose and set at order'd times,
And shot a day-spring into distant climes,
Ennobling every region that he chose,
He sunk in Greece, in Italy he rose,
And tedious years of Gothic darkness past,
Emerged all splendour in our isle at last.
Thus lovely Halcyons dive into the main,
Then show far off their shining plumes again.

A. Is genius only found in epic lays?
Prove this, and forfeit all pretence to praise.
Make their heroic powers your own at once,
Or candidly confess yourself a dunce.

B. These were the chief; each interval of night
Was graced with many an undulating light;
In less illustrious bards his beauty shone
A meteor or a star; in these, the sun.
The nightingale may claim the topmost bough,
While the poor grasshopper must chirp below.
Like him unnoticed, I, and such as I,
Spread little wings, and rather skip than fly;
Perch'd on the meagre produce of the land,
An ell or two of prospect we command,
But never peep beyond the thorny bound,
Or oaken fence, that hems the paddock round.
In Eden ere yet innocence of heart
Had faded, poetry was not an art;
Language above all teaching, or if taught,
Only by gratitude and glowing thought,
Elegant as simplicity, and warm
As ecstasy, unmanacled by form,
Not prompted, as in our degenerate days,
By low ambition and the thirst of praise,
Was natural as is the flowing stream,
And yet magnificent, a God the theme.
That theme on earth exhausted, though above
'Tis found as everlasting as his love,
Man lavish'd all his thoughts on human things,
The feats of heroes and the wrath of kings,
But still while virtue kindled his delight,
The song was moral, and so far was right.
'Twas thus till luxury seduced the mind
To joys less innocent, as less refined,
Then genius danced a bacchanal, he crown'd
The brimming goblet, seized the thyrsus, bound

His brows with ivy, rush'd into the field
Of wild imagination, and there reel'd
The victim of his own lascivious fires,
And dizzy with delight, profaned the sacred wires.
Anacreon, Horace, play'd in Greece and Rome
This Bedlam part; and, others nearer home.
When Cromwell fought for power, and while he reign'd
The proud protector of the power he gain'd,
Religion harsh, intolerant, austere,
Parent of manners like herself severe,
Drew a rough copy of the Christian face
Without the smile, the sweetness, or the grace;
The dark and sullen humour of the time
Judged every effort of the Muse a crime;
Verse in the finest mould of fancy cast,
Was lumber in an age so void of taste:
But when the second Charles assumed the sway,
And arts revived beneath a softer day,
Then like a bow long forced into a curve,
The mind released from too constrain'd a nerve,
Flew to its first position with a spring
That made the vaulted roofs of pleasure ring.
His court, the dissolute and hateful school
Of wantonness, where vice was taught by rule,
Swarm'd with a scribbling herd as deep inlaid
With brutal lust as ever Circe made.
From these a long succession, in the rage
Of rank obscenity debauch'd their age,
Nor ceased, till ever anxious to redress
The abuses of her sacred charge, the press,
The Muse instructed a well nurtured train
Of abler votaries to cleanse the stain,

And claim the palm for purity of song,
That lewdness had usurped and worn so long.
Then decent pleasantry and sterling sense
That neither gave nor would endure offence,
Whipp'd out of sight with satire just and keen,
The puppy pack that had defiled the scene.
In front of these came Addison. In him
Humour in holiday and sightly trim,
Sublimity and attic taste combined,
To polish, furnish, and delight the mind.
Then Pope, as harmony itself exact,
In verse well disciplined, complete, compact,
Gave virtue and morality a grace
That quite eclipsing pleasure's painted face,
Levied a tax of wonder and applause,
Even on the fools that trampled on their laws.
But he, (his musical finesse was such,
So nice his ear, so delicate his touch)
Made poetry a mere mechanic art,
And every warbler has his tune by heart.
Nature imparting her satiric gift,
Her serious mirth, to Arbuthnot and Swift,
With droll sobriety they raised a smile
At folly's cost, themselves unmoved the while.
That constellation set, the world in vain
Must hope to look upon their like again.
A. Are we then left—*B.* Not wholly in the dark :
Wit now and then, struck smartly, shows a spark,
Sufficient to redeem the modern race
From total night and absolute disgrace.
While servile trick and imitative knack
Confine the million in the beaten track,

Perhaps some courser who disdains the road,
Snuffs up the wind and flings himself abroad.
Contemporaries all surpass'd, see one,
Short his career, indeed, but ably run.
Churchill, himself unconscious of his powers,
In penury consumed his idle hours,
And like a scattered seed at random sown,
Was left to spring by vigour of his own.
Lifted at length by dignity of thought,
And dint of genius to an affluent lot,
He laid his head in luxury's soft lap,
And took too often there his easy nap.
If brighter beams than all he threw not forth,
'Twas negligence in him, not want of worth.
Surly and slovenly and bold and coarse,
Too proud for art, and trusting in mere force,
Spendthrift alike of money and of wit,
Always at speed, and never drawing bit,
He struck the lyre in such a careless mood,
And so disdain'd the rules he understood,
The laurel seem'd to wait on his command,
He snatch'd it rudely from the Muse's hand.
Nature exerting an unwearied power,
Forms, opens and gives scent to every flower,
Spreads the fresh verdure of the field, and leads
The dancing Naiads through the dewy meads,
She fills profuse ten thousand little throats
With music, modulating all their notes,
And charms the woodland scenes and wilds unknown,
With artless airs and concerts of her own;
But seldom (as if fearful of expense)
Vouchsafes to man a poet's just pretence.

Fervency, freedom, fluency of thought,
Harmony, strength, words exquisitely sought,
Fancy that from the bow that spans the sky,
Brings colours dipt in heaven that never die,
A soul exalted above earth, a mind
Skill'd in the characters that form mankind,—
And as the sun in rising beauty dress'd,
Looks to the westward from the dappled east,
And marks, whatever clouds may interpose,
Ere yet his race begins, its glorious close,
An eye like his to catch the distant goal,
Or ere the wheels of verse begin to roll,
Like his to shed illuminating rays
On every scene and subject it surveys,—
Thus graced the man asserts a poet's name,
And the world cheerfully admits the claim.

Pity! Religion has so seldom found
A skilful guide into poetic ground!
The flowers would spring where'er she deign'd to stray,
And every Muse attend her in her way.
Virtue indeed meets many a rhyming friend,
And many a compliment politely penn'd,
But unattired in that becoming vest
Religion weaves for her, and half undress'd,
Stands in the desert shivering and forlorn,
A wintry figure, like a wither'd thorn.
The shelves are full, all other themes are sped;
Hackney'd and worn to the last flimsy thread,
Satire has long since done his best, and curst
And loathsome ribaldry has done his worst;
Fancy has sported all her powers away
In tales, in trifles, and in children's play,

And 'tis the sad complaint, and almost true,
Whate'er we write, we bring forth nothing new.
'Twere new indeed, to see a bard all fire,
Touch'd with a coal from heaven, assume the lyre,
And tell the world, still kindling as he sung,
With more than mortal music on his tongue,
That He who died below, and reigns above
Inspires the song, and that his name is Love.
For after all, if merely to beguile
By flowing numbers and a flowery style
The tædium that the lazy rich endure,
Which now and then sweet poetry may cure,
Or if to see the name of idol self
Stamp'd on the well-bound quarto, grace the shelf,
To float a bubble on the breath of fame,
Prompt his endeavour, and engage his aim,
Debased to servile purposes of pride,
How are the powers of genius misapplied!
The gift whose office is the giver's praise,
To trace him in his word, his works, his ways,
Then spread the rich discovery, and invite
Mankind to share in the divine delight,
Distorted from its use and just design,
To make the pitiful possessor shine,
To purchase at the fool-frequented fair
Of vanity, a wreath for self to wear,
Is profanation of the basest kind,
Proof of a trifling and a worthless mind.
A. Hail Sternhold then and Hopkins hail! *B.* Amen.
If flattery, folly, lust employ the pen,
If acrimony, slander and abuse,
Give it a charge to blacken and traduce;

Though Butler's wit, Pope's numbers, Prior's ease,
With all that fancy can invent to please,
Adorn the polish'd periods as they fall,
One madrigal of theirs is worth them all.

A. 'Twould thin the ranks of the poetic tribe,
To dash the pen through all that you proscribe.

B. No matter;—we could shift when they were not,
And should no doubt if they were all forgot.

THE PROGRESS OF ERROR.

Si quid loquar audiendum.—Hor. lib. iv. od. 2.

Sing, Muse, (if such a theme, so dark, so long,
May find a Muse to grace it with a song,)
By what unseen and unsuspected arts
The serpent Error twines round human hearts,
Tell where she lurks, beneath what flowery shades
That not a glimpse of genuine light pervades,
The poisonous, black, insinuating worm
Successfully conceals her loathsome form.
Take, if ye can, ye careless and supine!
Counsel and caution from a voice like mine;
Truths that the theorist could never reach,
And observation taught me, I would teach.

Not all whose eloquence the fancy fills,
Musical as the chime of tinkling rills,
Weak to perform, though mighty to pretend,
Can trace her mazy windings to their end,

Discern the fraud beneath the specious lure,
Prevent the danger, or prescribe the cure.
The clear harangue, and cold as it is clear,
Falls soporific on the listless ear;
Like quicksilver, the rhetoric they display
Shines as it runs, but grasp'd at slips away.

Placed for his trial on this bustling stage,
From thoughtless youth to ruminating age,
Free in his will to choose or to refuse,
Man may improve the crisis, or abuse.
Else, on the fatalist's unrighteous plan,
Say, to what bar amenable were man?
With nought in charge, he could betray no trust,
And if he fell, would fall because he must;
If love reward him, or if vengeance strike,
His recompense in both, unjust alike.
Divine authority within his breast
Brings every thought, word, action to the test,
Warns him or prompts, approves him or restrains,
As reason, or as passion, takes the reins.
Heaven from above, and Conscience from within,
Cry in his startled ear, "Abstain from sin!"
The world around solicits his desire,
And kindles in his soul a treacherous fire,
While all his purposes and steps to guard,
Peace follows virtue as its sure reward,
And pleasure brings as surely in her train,
Remorse and sorrow and vindictive pain.

Man thus endued with an elective voice,
Must be supplied with objects of his choice.
Where'er he turns, enjoyment and delight,
Or present, or in prospect, meet his sight;

These open on the spot their honey'd store,
Those call him loudly to pursuit of more.
His unexhausted mine, the sordid vice
Avarice shows, and virtue is the price.
Here, various motives his ambition raise,
Power, pomp, and splendour, and the thirst of praise:
There beauty woos him with expanded arms;
E'en Bacchanalian madness has its charms.
Nor these alone, whose pleasures less refined
Might well alarm the most unguarded mind,
Seek to supplant his unexperienced youth,
Or lead him devious from the path of truth;
Hourly allurements on his passions press,
Safe in themselves, but dangerous in the excess.
Hark! how it floats upon the dewy air:—
O what a dying, dying close was there!
'Tis harmony from yon sequestered bower,
Sweet harmony that soothes the midnight hour:
Long ere the charioteer of day had run
His morning course, the enchantment was begun.
And he shall gild yon mountains height again,
Ere yet the pleasing toil becomes a pain.
Is this the rugged path, the steep ascent
That virtue points to? Can a life thus spent
Lead to the bliss she promises the wise,
Detach the soul from earth, and speed her to the skies?
Ye devotees to your adored employ,
Enthusiasts, drunk with an unreal joy,
Love makes the music of the blest above,
Heaven's harmony is universal love;
And earthly sounds, though sweet and well combined,
And lenient as soft opiates to the mind,
Leave vice and folly unsubdued behind.

Grey dawn appears, the sportsman and his train
Speckle the bosom of the distant plain;
'Tis he, the Nimrod of the neighbouring lairs,
Save that his scent is less acute than theirs,
For persevering chase and headlong leaps,
True beagle as the staunchest hound he keeps.
Charged with the folly of his life's mad scene,
He takes offence, and wonders what you mean;
The joy, the danger and the toil o'erpays;
'Tis exercise, and health, and length of days.
Again impetuous to the field he flies,
Leaps every fence but one, there falls and dies;
Like a slain deer, the tumbril brings him home,
Unmiss'd but by his dogs and by his groom.

Ye clergy, while your orbit is your place,
Lights of the world, and stars of human race,—
But if eccentric ye forsake your sphere,
Prodigious, ominous, and view'd with fear,
The comet's baneful influence is a dream,
Yours real, and pernicious in the extreme.
What then,—are appetites and lusts laid down,
With the same ease the man puts on his gown?
Will avarice and concupiscence give place,
Charm'd by the sounds, your reverence, or your grace?
No. But his own engagement binds him fast;
Or if it does not, brands him to the last
What atheists call him, a designing knave,
A mere church juggler, hypocrite, and slave.
Oh laugh, or mourn with me, the rueful jest,
A cassock'd huntsman, and a fiddling priest;
He from Italian songsters takes his cue,
Set Paul to music, he shall quote him too.

He takes the field, the master of the pack
Cries, Well done, Saint!—and claps him on the back.
Is this the path of sanctity? Is this
To stand a way-mark in the road to bliss?
Himself a wanderer from the narrow way,
His silly sheep, what wonder if they stray?
Go, cast your orders at your Bishop's feet,
Send your dishonour'd gown to Monmouth Street,
The sacred function, in your hands is made,
Sad sacrilege! no function, but a trade.

Occiduus is a pastor of renown;
When he has pray'd and preach'd the sabbath down,
With wire and catgut he concludes the day,
Quavering and semiquavering care away.
The full concerto swells upon your ear;
All elbows shake. Look in, and you would swear
The Babylonian tyrant with a nod
Had summon'd them to serve his golden god.
So well that thought the employment seems to suit,
Psaltery and sackbut, dulcimer and flute.
Oh fie! 'Tis evangelical and pure;
Observe each face, how sober and demure!
Ecstasy sets her stamp on every mien,
Chins fallen, and not an eye-ball to be seen.
Still I insist, though music heretofore
Has charm'd me much, not even Occiduus more,
Love, joy, and peace make harmony more meet
For sabbath evenings, and perhaps as sweet.

Will not the sickliest sheep of every flock
Resort to this example as a rock,
There stand and justify the foul abuse
Of sabbath hours, with plausible excuse?

If apostolic gravity be free
To play the fool on Sundays, why not we?
If he the tinkling harpsichord regards
As inoffensive, what offence in cards?
Strike up the fiddles! let us all be gay!
Laymen have leave to dance, if parsons play.
Oh Italy! Thy sabbaths will be soon
Our sabbaths, closed with mummery and buffoon.
Preaching and pranks will share the motley scene,
Ours parcell'd out, as thine have ever been,
God's worship and the mountebank between.
What says the prophet? Let that day be blest
With holiness and consecrated rest.
Pastime and business both it should exclude,
And bar the door the moment they intrude,
Nobly distinguish'd above all the six,
By deeds in which the world must never mix.
Hear him again. He calls it a delight,
A day of luxury, observed aright,
When the glad soul is made heaven's welcome guest,
Sits banqueting, and God provides the feast.
But triflers are engaged and cannot come;
Their answer to the call is—*Not at home.*
Oh the dear pleasures of the velvet plain,
The painted tablets, dealt and dealt again.
Cards with what rapture, and the polish'd die,
The yawning chasm of indolence supply!
Then to the dance, and make the sober moon
Witness of joys that shun the sight of noon.
Blame, cynic, if you can, quadrille or ball,
The snug close party, or the splendid hall,
Where night down-stooping from her ebon throne,
Views constellations brighter than her own.

'Tis innocent, and harmless, and refined,
The balm of care, elysium of the mind.
Innocent!—Oh, if venerable time
Slain at the foot of pleasure be no crime,
Then with his silver beard and magic wand,
Let Comus rise Archbishop of the land,
Let him your rubric and your feasts prescribe,
Grand metropolitan of all the tribe.

Of manners rough, and coarse athletic cast,
The rank debauch suits Clodio's filthy taste.
Rufillus, exquisitely form'd by rule,
Not of the moral, but the dancing school,
Wonders at Clodio's follies, in a tone
As tragical, as others at his own.
He cannot drink five bottles, bilk the score,
Then kill a constable, and drink five more;
But he can draw a pattern, make a tart,
And has the ladies' etiquette by heart.
Go, fool, and arm in arm with Clodio plead
Your cause before a bar you little dread;
But know, the law that bids the drunkard die
Is far too just to pass the trifler by.
Both baby-featured and of infant size,
View'd from a distance, and with heedless eyes,
Folly and innocence are so alike,
The difference, though essential, fails to strike.
Yet folly ever has a vacant stare,
A simpering countenance, and a trifling air;
But innocence, sedate, serene, erect,
Delights us, by engaging our respect.

Man, Nature's guest by invitation sweet,
Receives from her both appetite and treat;

But if he play the glutton and exceed,
His benefactress blushes at the deed.
For nature, nice, as liberal to dispense,
Made nothing but a brute the slave of sense.
Daniel ate pulse by choice,—example rare!
Heaven bless'd the youth, and made him fresh and fair.
Gorgonius sits abdominous and wan,
Like a fat squab upon a Chinese fan;
He snuffs far off the anticipated joy,
Turtle and venison all his thoughts employ,
Prepares for meals, as jockeys take a sweat,
Oh nauseous! an emetic for a whet,—
Will Providence o'erlook the wasted good?
Temperance were no virtue if he could.

That pleasures, therefore, or what such we call,
Are hurtful, is a truth confess'd by all.
And some that seem to threaten virtue less,
Still hurtful, in the abuse, or by the excess.

Is man then only for his torment placed,
The centre of delights he may not taste?
Like fabled Tantalus condemn'd to hear
The precious stream still purling in his ear,
Lip-deep in what he longs for, and yet curst
With prohibition and perpetual thirst?
No, wrangler,—destitute of shame and sense!
The precept that enjoins him abstinence,
Forbids him none but the licentious joy,
Whose fruit, though fair, tempts only to destroy.
Remorse, the fatal egg by pleasure laid
In every bosom where her nest is made,
Hatch'd by the beams of truth, denies him rest,
And proves a raging scorpion in his breast.

No pleasure? Are domestic comforts dead?
Are all the nameless sweets of friendship fled?
Has time worn out, or fashion put to shame
Good sense, good health, good conscience, and good fame?
All these belong to virtue, and all prove
That virtue has a title to your love.
Have you no touch of pity, that the poor
Stand starved at your inhospitable door?
Or if yourself, too scantily supplied,
Need help, let honest industry provide.
Earn, if you want; if you abound, impart;
These both are pleasures to the feeling heart.
No pleasure? Has some sickly eastern waste
Sent us a wind to parch us at a blast?
Can British paradise no scenes afford
To please her sated and indifferent lord?
Are sweet philosophy's enjoyments run
Quite to the lees? And has religion none?
Brutes capable, should tell you 'tis a lie,
And judge you from the kennel and the sty.
Delights like these, ye sensual and profane,
Ye are bid, begg'd, besought to entertain;
Call'd to these crystal streams, do ye turn off
Obscene, to swill and swallow at a trough?
Envy the beast then, on whom heaven bestows
Your pleasures, with no curses in the close!
Pleasure admitted in undue degree,
Enslaves the will, nor leaves the judgement free.
'Tis not alone the grape's enticing juice
Unnerves the moral powers, and mars their use,
Ambition, avarice, and the lust of fame,
And woman, lovely woman, does the same.

The heart, surrendered to the ruling power
Of some ungovern'd passion every hour,
Finds, by degrees, the truths that once bore sway,
And all their deep impression wear away.
So coin grows smooth, in traffic current pass'd,
'Till Cæsar's image is effaced at last.

The breach, though small at first, soon opening wide,
In rushes folly with a full moon tide.
Then welcome errors of whatever size,
To justify it by a thousand lies.
As creeping ivy clings to wood or stone,
And hides the ruin that it feeds upon,
So sophistry cleaves close to and protects
Sin's rotten trunk, concealing its defects.
Mortals whose pleasures are their only care,
First wish to be imposed on, and then are;
And lest the fulsome artifice should fail,
Themselves will hide its coarseness with a veil.
Not more industrious are the just and true
To give to virtue what is virtue's due,
The praise of wisdom, comeliness, and worth,
And call her charms to public notice forth,
Than vice's mean and disingenuous race
To hide the shocking features of her face:
Her form with dress and lotion they repair,
Then kiss their idol, and pronounce her fair.

The sacred implement I now employ
Might prove a mischief, or at best a toy,
A trifle if it move but to amuse,
But if to wrong the judgement and abuse,
Worse than a poniard in the basest hand,
It stabs at once the morals of a land.

Ye writers of what none with safety reads,
Footing it in the dance that fancy leads,
Ye novelists, who mar what ye would mend,
Sniveling and driveling folly without end,
Whose corresponding misses fill the ream
With sentimental frippery and dream,
Caught in a delicate soft silken net
By some lewd Earl or rake-hell Baronet:
Ye pimps, who, under virtue's fair pretence,
Steal to the closet of young innocence,
And teach her, unexperienced yet and green,
To scribble as you scribble, at fifteen;
Who kindling a combustion of desire,
With some cold moral think to quench the fire,
Though all your engineering proves in vain,
The dribbling stream ne'er puts it out again;
Oh that a verse had power, and could command
Far, far away these fleshflies of the land,
Who fasten without mercy on the fair,
And suck, and leave a craving maggot there.
Howe'er disguised the inflammatory tale,
And covered with a fine-spun specious veil,
Such writers and such readers owe the gust
And relish of their pleasure all to lust.

But the muse, eagle-pinion'd, has in view
A quarry more important still than you;
Down, down the wind she swims and sails away,
Now stoops upon it, and now grasps the prey.

Petronius! all the muses weep for thee,
But every tear shall scald thy memory.
The graces too, while virtue at their shrine
Lay bleeding under that soft hand of thine,

Felt each a mortal stab in her own breast,
Abhorr'd the sacrifice, and cursed the priest.
Thou polish'd and high-finish'd foe to truth,
Gray-beard corruptor of our listening youth,
To purge and skim away the filth of vice,
That so refined it might the more entice,
Then pour it on the morals of thy son
To taint *his* heart, was worthy of *thine own*.
Now while the poison all high life pervades,
Write if thou canst one letter from the shades,
One, and one only, charged with deep regret,
That thy worst part, thy principles, live yet;
One sad epistle thence may cure mankind
Of the plague spread by bundles left behind.

'Tis granted, and no plainer truth appears,
Our most important are our earliest years.
The mind impressible and soft, with ease
Imbibes and copies what she hears and sees,
And through life's labyrinth holds fast the clue
That education gives her, false or true.
Plants raised with tenderness are seldom strong;
Man's coltish disposition asks the thong,
And without discipline the favourite child,
Like a neglected forester, runs wild.
But we, as if good qualities would grow
Spontaneous, take but little pains to sow;
We give some Latin and a smatch of Greek,
Teach him to fence and figure twice a week,
And having done, we think, the best we can,
Praise his proficiency and dub him man.

From school to Cam or Isis, and thence home,
And thence with all convenient speed to Rome.

With reverend tutor clad in habit lay,
To tease for cash, and quarrel with all day;
With memorandum-book for every town,
And every post, and where the chaise broke down;
His stock, a few French phrases got by heart,
With much to learn, but nothing to impart,
The youth, obedient to his sire's commands,
Sets off a wanderer into foreign lands:
Surprised at all they meet, the gosling pair
With awkward gait, stretch'd neck, and silly stare,
Discover huge cathedrals built with stone,
And steeples towering high much like our own,
But show peculiar light by many a grin
At Popish practices observed within.

Ere long some bowing, smirking, smart Abbé
Remarks two loiterers that have lost their way,
And being always primed with *politesse*
For men of their appearance and address,
With much compassion undertakes the task,
To tell them more than they have wit to ask.
Points to inscriptions wheresoe'er they tread,
Such as when legible were never read,
But being canker'd now, and half worn out,
Craze antiquarian brains with endless doubt:
Some headless hero or some Cæsar shows,
Defective only in his Roman nose;
Exhibits elevations, drawings, plans,
Models of Herculanean pots and pans,
And sells them medals, which if neither rare
Nor ancient, will be so, preserved with care.

Strange the recital! from whatever cause
His great improvement and new lights he draws,

The 'Squire once bashful is shamefaced no more,
But teems with powers he never felt before:
Whether increased momentum, and the force
With which from clime to clime he sped his course,
As axles sometimes kindle as they go,
Chafed him and brought dull nature to a glow;
Or whether clearer skies and softer air,
That make Italian flowers so sweet and fair,
Freshening his lazy spirits as he ran,
Unfolded genially and spread the man,
Returning, he proclaims by many a grace,
By shrugs and strange contortions of his face,
How much a dunce that has been sent to roam,
Excels a dunce that has been kept at home.

Accomplishments have taken virtue's place,
And wisdom falls before exterior grace;
We slight the precious kernel of the stone,
And toil to polish its rough coat alone.
A just deportment, manners graced with ease,
Elegant phrase, and figure form'd to please,
Are qualities that seem to comprehend
Whatever parents, guardians, schools intend.
Hence an unfurnish'd and a listless mind,
Though busy, trifling; empty, though refined;
Hence all that interferes, and dares to clash
With indolence and luxury, is trash;
While learning, once the man's exclusive pride,
Seems verging fast towards the female side.

Learning itself, received into a mind
By nature weak, or viciously inclined,
Serves but to lead philosophers astray
Where children would with ease discern the way.

And of all arts sagacious dupes invent
To cheat themselves and gain the world's assent,
The worst is scripture warp'd from its intent.

The carriage bowls along and all are pleased
If Tom be sober, and the wheels well greased;
But if the rogue have gone a cup too far,
Left out his linch-pin or forgot his tar,
It suffers interruption and delay,
And meets with hinderance in the smoothest way.
When some hypothesis absurd and vain
Has fill'd with all its fumes a critic's brain,
The text that sorts not with his darling whim,
Though plain to others, is obscure to him.
The will made subject to a lawless force,
All is irregular and out of course,
And judgement drunk, and bribed to lose his way,
Winks hard, and talks of darkness at noonday.

A critic on the sacred book should be
Candid and learn'd, dispassionate and free;
Free from the wayward bias bigots feel,
From fancy's influence, and intemperate zeal.
But above all (or let the wretch refrain,
Nor touch the page he cannot but profane,)
Free from the domineering power of lust,
A lewd interpreter is never just.

How shall I speak thee, or thy power address,
Thou God of our idolatry, the press?
By thee, religion, liberty, and laws
Exert their influence, and advance their cause;
By thee, worse plagues than Pharaoh's land befel,
Diffused, make earth the vestibule of hell:
Thou fountain, at which drink the good and wise,
Thou ever-bubbling spring of endless lies,

Like Eden's dread probationary tree,
Knowledge of good and evil is from thee.
No wild enthusiast ever yet could rest,
Till half mankind were like himself possess'd.
Philosophers, who darken and put out
Eternal truth by everlasting doubt,
Church quacks, with passions under no command,
Who fill the world with doctrines contraband,
Discoverers of they know not what, confined
Within no bounds, the blind that lead the blind,
To streams of popular opinion drawn,
Deposit in those shallows all their spawn.
The wriggling fry soon fill the creeks around,
Poisoning the waters where their swarms abound;
Scorn'd by the nobler tenants of the flood,
Minnows and gudgeons gorge the unwholesome food.
The propagated myriads spread so fast,
Even Leuwenhoek himself would stand aghast,
Employed to calculate the enormous sum,
And own his crab-computing powers o'ercome.
Is this hyperbole? The world well known,
Your sober thoughts will hardly find it one.
Fresh confidence the speculatist takes
From every hare-brain'd proselyte he makes,
And therefore prints:—Himself but half deceived,
'Till others have the soothing tale believed.
Hence comment after comment, spun as fine
As bloated spiders draw the flimsy line;
Hence the same word that bids our lusts obey
Is misapplied to sanctify their sway.
If stubborn Greek refuse to be his friend,
Hebrew or Syriac shall be forced to bend;

If languages and copies all cry, No!—
Somebody proved it centuries ago.
Like trout pursued, the critic in despair
Darts to the mud and finds his safety there.
Women, whom custom has forbid to fly
The scholar's pitch, (the scholar best knows why)
With all the simple and unlettered poor,
Admire his learning, and almost adore.
Whoever errs, the priest can ne'er be wrong,
With such fine words familiar to his tongue.

Ye ladies! (for, indifferent in your cause,
I should deserve to forfeit all applause,)
Whatever shocks, or gives the least offence
To virtue, delicacy, truth, or sense,
(Try the criterion, 'tis a faithful guide,)
Nor has, nor can have scripture on its side.

None but an author knows an author's cares,
Or fancy's fondness for the child she bears.
Committed once into the public arms,
The baby seems to smile with added charms.
Like something precious ventured far from shore,
'Tis valued for the dangers sake the more.
He views it with complacency supreme,
Solicits kind attention to his dream,
And daily more enamour'd of the cheat,
Kneels, and asks heaven to bless the dear deceit.
So one, whose story serves at least to show
Men loved their own productions long ago,
Wooed an unfeeling statue for his wife,
Nor rested till the Gods had given it life.
If some mere driveler suck the sugar'd fib,
One that still needs his leading-string and bib,

And praise his genius, he is soon repaid
In praise applied to the same part, his head.
For 'tis a rule that holds for ever true,
Grant me discernment, and I grant it you.

Patient of contradiction as a child,
Affable, humble, diffident, and mild,
Such was Sir Isaac, and such Boyle and Locke:
Your blunderer is as sturdy as a rock.
The creature is so sure to kick and bite,
A muleteer's the man to set him right.
First appetite enlists him truth's sworn foe,
Then obstinate self-will confirms him so.

Tell him he wanders, that his error leads
To fatal ills, that though the path he treads
Be flowery, and he see no cause of fear,
Death and the pains of Hell attend him there:
In vain; the slave of arrogance and pride,
He has no hearing on the prudent side.
His still refuted quirks he still repeats,
New raised objections with new quibbles meets,
Till sinking in the quicksand he defends,
He dies disputing, and the contest ends;
But not the mischiefs: they still left behind,
Like thistle-seeds are sown by every wind.

Thus men go wrong with an ingenious skill,
Bend the straight rule to their own crooked will,
And with a clear and shining lamp supplied,
First put it out, then take it for a guide.
Halting on crutches of unequal size,
One leg by truth supported, one by lies,
They sidle to the goal with awkward pace,
Secure of nothing, but to lose the race.

Faults in the life breed errors in the brain,
And these, reciprocally, those again.
The mind and conduct mutually imprint
And stamp their image in each other's mint.
Each, sire and dam of an infernal race,
Begetting and conceiving all that's base.

None sends his arrow to the mark in view,
Whose hand is feeble, or his aim untrue.
For though ere yet the shaft is on the wing,
Or when it first forsakes the elastic string,
It err but little from the intended line,
It falls at last, far wide of his design.
So he that seeks a mansion in the sky,
Must watch his purpose with a steadfast eye;
That prize belongs to none but the sincere,
The least obliquity is fatal here.

With caution taste the sweet Circæan cup.
He that sips often, at last drinks it up.
Habits are soon assumed, but when we strive
To strip them off, 'tis being flay'd alive.
Call'd to the temple of impure delight,
He that abstains, and he alone, does right.
If a wish wander that way, call it home;
He cannot long be safe whose wishes roam.
But if you pass the threshold, you are caught;
Die then, if power Almighty save you not!
There hardening by degrees, till double steel'd,
Take leave of nature's God, and God reveal'd;
Then laugh at all you trembled at before,
And joining the freethinkers' brutal roar,
Swallow the two grand nostrums they dispense,
That scripture lies, and blasphemy is sense;

If clemency revolted by abuse
Be damnable, then, damn'd without excuse.
Some dream that they can silence when they will
The storm of passion, and say, *Peace, be still;*
But "*Thus far and no farther,*" when address'd
To the wild wave, or wilder human breast,
Implies authority that never can,
That never ought to be the lot of man.
But, muse, forbear, long flights forebode a fall,
Strike on the deep-toned chord the sum of all.
Hear the just law, the judgement of the skies!
He that hates truth shall be the dupe of lies.
And he that *will* be cheated to the last,
Delusions, strong as Hell, shall bind him fast.
But if the wanderer his mistake discern,
Judge his own ways, and sigh for a return,
Bewildered once, must he bewail his loss
For ever and for ever? No—the Cross!
There and there only, (though the deist rave,
And atheist, if earth bear so base a slave)
There and there only, is the power to save.
There no delusive hope invites despair,
No mockery meets you, no deception there.
The spells and charms that blinded you before,
All vanish there, and fascinate no more.
I am no preacher; let this hint suffice,
The Cross once seen is death to every vice:
Else He that hung there suffered all his pain,
Bled, groan'd, and agonized, and died in vain.

TRUTH.

Pensentur trutinâ.—Hor.

Man on the dubious waves of error toss'd,
His ship half founder'd and his compass lost,
Sees, far as human optics may command,
A sleeping fog, and fancies it dry land:
Spreads all his canvass, every sinew plies,
Pants for it, aims at it, enters it, and dies.
Then farewell all self-satisfying schemes,
His well built systems, philosophic dreams,
Deceitful views of future bliss, farewell!
He reads his sentence at the flames of Hell.
Hard lot of man! to toil for the reward
Of virtue, and yet lose it!—Wherefore hard?
He that would win the race, must guide his horse
Obedient to the customs of the course,
Else, though unequall'd to the goal he flies,
A meaner than himself shall gain the prize.
Grace leads the right way,—if you choose the wrong,
Take it and perish, but restrain your tongue;
Charge not, with light sufficient and left free,
Your wilful suicide on God's decree.
Oh how unlike the complex works of man,
Heaven's easy, artless, unincumber'd plan!
No meretricious graces to beguile,
No clustering ornaments to clog the pile,
From ostentation as from weakness free,
It stands like the cærulean arch we see,
Majestic in its own simplicity.

Inscribed above the portal, from afar
Conspicuous as the brightness of a star,
Legible only by the light they give,
Stand the soul-quickening words—BELIEVE AND LIVE.
Too many, shock'd at what should charm them most,
Despise the plain direction and are lost.
Heaven on such terms! they cry with proud disdain,
Incredible, impossible, and vain!—
Rebel because 'tis easy to obey,
And scorn for its own sake the gracious way.
These are the sober, in whose cooler brains
Some thought of immortality remains;
The rest too busy or too gay, to wait
On the sad theme, their everlasting state,
Sport for a day and perish in a night,
The foam upon the waters not so light.

Who judged the Pharisee? What odious cause
Exposed him to the vengeance of the laws?
Had he seduced a virgin, wrong'd a friend,
Or stabb'd a man to serve some private end?
Was blasphemy his sin? Or did he stray
From the strict duties of the sacred day?
Sit long and late at the carousing board?
(Such were the sins with which he charged his Lord,)
No—the man's morals were exact; what then?
'Twas his ambition to be seen of men;
His virtues were his pride; and that one vice
Made all his virtues gewgaws of no price;
He wore them as fine trappings for a show,
A praying, synagogue-frequenting beau.

The self-applauding bird, the peacock see,—
Mark what a sumptuous Pharisee is he!

Meridian sun-beams tempt him to unfold
His radiant glories, azure, green, and gold;
He treads as if, some solemn music near,
His measured step were govern'd by his ear,
And seems to say, Ye meaner fowl, give place!
I am all splendour, dignity, and grace.
Not so the pheasant on his charms presumes,
Though he too has a glory in his plumes.
He, Christian-like, retreats with modest mien,
To the close copse or far sequestered green,
And shines without desiring to be seen.
The plea of works, as arrogant and vain,
Heaven turns from with abhorrence and disdain;
Not more affronted by avowed neglect,
Than by the mere dissembler's feign'd respect.
What is all righteousness that men devise,
What, but a sordid bargain for the skies?
But Christ as soon would abdicate his own,
As stoop from heaven to sell the proud a throne.
His dwelling a recess in some rude rock,
Book, beads, and maple dish[1] his meagre stock,
In shirt of hair and weeds of canvass dress'd,
Girt with a bell-rope that the Pope has bless'd,
Adust with stripes told out for every crime,
And sore tormented long before his time,
His prayer preferr'd to saints that cannot aid,
His praise postponed, and never to be paid,
See the sage hermit by mankind admired,
With all that bigotry adopts, inspired,

[1] For who would rob a hermit of his weeds,
His few books, or his beads, or maple dish?
Comus.

Wearing out life in his religious whim,
Till his religious whimsy wears out him.
His works, his abstinence, his zeal allow'd,
You think him humble, God accounts him proud;
High in demand, though lowly in pretence,
Of all his conduct this the genuine sense,—
My penitential stripes, my streaming blood
Have purchased heaven, and prove my title good.

Turn eastward now, and fancy shall apply
To your weak sight her telescopic eye.
The Bramin kindles on his own bare head
The sacred fire, self-torturing his trade;
His voluntary pains, severe and long,
Would give a barbarous air to British song;
No grand inquisitor could worse invent,
Than he contrives to suffer, well content.

Which is the saintlier worthy of the two?
Past all dispute, yon anchorite, say you.
Your sentence and mine differ. What's a name?
I say the Bramin has the fairer claim.
If sufferings scripture no where recommends,
Devised by self to answer selfish ends,
Give saintship, then all Europe must agree,
Ten starveling hermits suffer less than he.

The truth is, (if the truth may suit your ear,
And prejudice have left a passage clear,)
Pride has attained its most luxuriant growth,
And poisoned every virtue in them both.
Pride may be pampered while the flesh grows lean,
Humility may clothe an English Dean;
That grace was Cowper's,—his confess'd by all—
Though placed in golden Durham's second stall.

Not all the plenty of a Bishop's board,
His palace, and his lackeys, and, my Lord!
More nourish pride, that condescending vice,
Than abstinence, and beggary, and lice.
It thrives in misery, and abundant grows
In misery fools upon themselves impose.
But why before us Protestants produce
An Indian mystic or a French recluse?
Their sin is plain, but what have we to fear,
Reform'd and well instructed? You shall hear.
Yon ancient prude, whose withered features show
She might be young some forty years ago,
Her elbows pinion'd close upon her hips,
Her head erect, her fan upon her lips,
Her eyebrows arch'd, her eyes both gone astray
To watch yon amorous couple in their play,
With bony and unkerchief'd neck defies
The rude inclemency of wintry skies,
And sails with lappet-head and mincing airs
Duely at clink of bell, to morning prayers.
To thrift and parsimony much inclined,
She yet allows herself that boy behind;
The shivering urchin, bending as he goes,
With slipshod heels, and dew-drop at his nose,
His predecessor's coat advanced to wear,
Which future pages are yet doom'd to share;
Carries her bible[2] tuck'd beneath his arm,
And hides his hands to keep his fingers warm.
She, half an angel in her own account,
Doubts not hereafter with the saints to mount,

[2] These lines are evidently formed upon Hogarth's print of Morning.

Though not a grace appears on strictest search,
But that she fasts, and item, goes to church.
Conscious of age she recollects her youth,
And tells, not always with an eye to truth,
Who spann'd her waist, and who, where'er he came,
Scrawl'd upon glass Miss Bridget's lovely name,
Who stole her slipper, fill'd it with tokay,
And drank the little bumper every day.
Of temper as envenom'd as an asp,
Censorious, and her every word a wasp,
In faithful memory she records the crimes
Or real, or fictitious, of the times,
Laughs at the reputations she has torn,
And holds them dangling at arm's length in scorn.

Such are the fruits of sanctimonious pride,
Of malice fed while flesh is mortified.
Take, Madam, the reward of all your prayers,
Where hermits and where Bramins meet with theirs!
Your portion is with them: nay, never frown,
But, if you please, some fathoms lower down.

Artist, attend!—your brushes and your paint—
Produce them—take a chair,—now draw a Saint.
Oh sorrowful and sad! the streaming tears
Channel her cheeks,—a Niobe appears.
Is this a Saint? Throw tints and all away!
True piety is cheerful as the day,
Will weep indeed and heave a pitying groan
For others' woes, but smiles upon her own.

What purpose has the King of Saints in view?
Why falls the gospel like a gracious dew?
To call up plenty from the teeming earth,
Or curse the desert with a tenfold dearth?

Is it that Adam's offspring may be saved
From servile fear, or be the more enslaved?
To loose the links that gall'd mankind before,
Or bind them faster on, and add still more?
The freeborn Christian has no chains to prove,
Or if a chain, the golden one of love;
No fear attends to quench his glowing fires,
What fear he feels his gratitude inspires.
Shall he for such deliverance freely wrought,
Recompense ill? He trembles at the thought:
His master's interest and his own combined,
Prompt every movement of his heart and mind;
Thought, word, and deed, his liberty evince,
His freedom is the freedom of a prince.

Man's obligations infinite, of course
His life should prove that he perceives their force:
His utmost he can render is but small,
The principle and motive all in all.
You have two servants,—Tom, an arch sly rogue,
From top to toe the Geta now in vogue;
Genteel in figure, easy in address,
Moves without noise, and swift as an express,
Reports a message with a pleasing grace,
Expert in all the duties of his place:
Say, on what hinge does his obedience move?
Has he a world of gratitude and love?
No, not a spark,—'tis all mere sharper's play;
He likes your house, your housemaid, and your pay;
Reduce his wages, or get rid of her,
Tom quits you, with, your most obedient, Sir.—

The dinner served, Charles takes his usual stand,
Watches your eye, anticipates command,

Sighs if perhaps your appetite should fail,
And if he but suspects a frown, turns pale;
Consults all day your interest and your ease,
Richly rewarded if he can but please,
And proud to make his firm attachment known,
To save your life would nobly risk his own.
Now, which stands highest in your serious thought?
Charles, without doubt, say you,—and so he ought;
One act that from a thankful heart proceeds,
Excels ten thousand mercenary deeds.
Thus heaven approves as honest and sincere,
The work of generous love and filial fear;
But with averted eyes the omniscient Judge
Scorns the base hireling and the slavish drudge,
Where dwell these matchless saints? old Curio cries;
Even at your side, Sir, and before your eyes,
The favour'd few, the enthusiasts you despise;
And pleased at heart because on holy ground
Sometimes a canting hypocrite is found,
Reproach a people with his single fall,
And cast his filthy raiment at them all.
Attend,—an apt similitude shall show,
Whence springs the conduct that offends you so.
See where it smokes along the sounding plain,
Blown all aslant, a driving dashing rain,
Peal upon peal redoubling all around,
Shakes it again and faster to the ground;
Now flashing wide, now glancing as in play,
Swift beyond thought the lightnings dart away;
Ere yet it came the traveller urged his steed,
And hurried, but with unsuccessful speed,
Now drench'd throughout, and hopeless of his case,
He drops the rein, and leaves him to his pace;

Suppose, unlook'd for in a scene so rude,
Long hid by interposing hill or wood,
Some mansion neat and elegantly dress'd
By some kind hospitable heart possess'd,
Offer him warmth, security and rest;
Think with what pleasure, safe and at his ease,
He hears the tempest howling in the trees,
What glowing thanks his lips and heart employ,
While danger past is turn'd to present joy.
So fares it with the sinner when he feels
A growing dread of vengeance at his heels;
His conscience, like a glassy lake before,
Lash'd into foaming waves begins to roar:
The law grown clamorous, though silent long,
Arraigns him, charges him with every wrong,
Asserts the rights of his offended Lord,
And death or restitution is the word;
The last impossible, he fears the first,
And having well deserved, expects the worst.
Then welcome refuge, and a peaceful home,
Oh for a shelter from the wrath to come!
Crush me, ye rocks, ye falling mountains, hide,
Or bury me in ocean's angry tide!—
The scrutiny of those all seeing eyes
I dare not—And you need not, God replies;
The remedy you want I freely give;
The book shall teach you, read, believe and live!
'Tis done—the raging storm is heard no more,
Mercy receives him on her peaceful shore[3],

[3] There from the ways of men laid safe ashore,
We smile to hear the distant tempest roar.
Young, Sat v.

And Justice, guardian of the dread command,
Drops the red vengeance from his willing hand.
A soul redeem'd demands a life of praise,
Hence the complexion of his future days,
Hence a demeanour holy and unspeck'd,
And the world's hatred, as its sure effect.

Some lead a life unblameable and just,
Their own dear virtue their unshaken trust.
They never sin,—or if (as all offend)
Some trivial slips their daily walk attend,
The poor are near at hand, the charge is small,
A slight gratuity atones for all.
For though the Pope has lost his interest here,
And pardons are not sold as once they were,
No papist more desirous to compound,
Than some grave sinners upon English ground:
That plea refuted, other quirks they seek,
Mercy is infinite and man is weak,
The future shall obliterate the past,
And heaven no doubt shall be their home at last.

Come then,—a still, small whisper in your ear,
He has no hope that never had a fear;
And he that never doubted of his state,
He may perhaps—perhaps he may—too late.

The path to bliss abounds with many a snare,
Learning is one, and wit, however rare:
The Frenchman first in literary fame,
(Mention him if you please,—Voltaire? the same)
With spirit, genius, eloquence supplied,
Lived long, wrote much, laugh'd heartily, and died:
The scripture was his jest-book, whence he drew
Bon mots to gall the Christian and the Jew:

An infidel in health, but what when sick?
Oh, then a text would touch him at the quick:
View him at Paris in his last career,
Surrounding throngs the demi-god revere,
Exalted on his pedestal of pride,
And fumed with frankincense on every side,
He begs their flattery with his latest breath,
And smothered in't at last, is praised to death.

Yon cottager who weaves at her own door,
Pillow and bobbins all her little store,
Content though mean, and cheerful, if not gay,
Shuffling her threads about the live-long day,
Just earns a scanty pittance, and at night
Lies down secure, her heart and pocket light;
She for her humble sphere by nature fit,
Has little understanding, and no wit,
Receives no praise, but (though her lot be such,
Toilsome and indigent) she renders much;
Just knows, and knows no more, her bible true,
A truth the brilliant Frenchman never knew,
And in that charter reads, with sparkling eyes,
Her title to a treasure in the skies.

O happy peasant! O unhappy bard!
His the mere tinsel, hers the rich reward;
He praised perhaps for ages yet to come,
She never heard of half a mile from home;
He lost in errors his vain heart prefers,
She safe in the simplicity of hers.

Not many wise, rich, noble, or profound
In science, win one inch of heavenly ground:
And is it not a mortifying thought
The poor should gain it, and the rich should not?

No;—the voluptuaries, who ne'er forget
One pleasure lost, lose heaven without regret;
Regret would rouse them and give birth to prayer.
Prayer would add faith, and faith would fix them there.
Not that the Former of us all in this,
Or aught he does, is govern'd by caprice;
The supposition is replete with sin,
And bears the brand of blasphemy burnt in.
Not so;—the silver trumpet's heavenly call,
Sounds for the poor, but sounds alike for all;
Kings are invited, and would kings obey,
No slaves on earth more welcome were than they:
But royalty, nobility, and state,
Are such a dead preponderating weight,
That endless bliss (how strange soe'er it seem)
In counterpoise, flies up and kicks the beam.
'Tis open and ye cannot enter;—why?
Because ye will not, Conyers would reply:—
And he says much that many may dispute
And cavil at with ease, but none refute.
Oh bless'd effect of penury and want,
The seed sown there, how vigorous is the plant!
No soil like poverty for growth divine,
As leanest land supplies the richest wine.
Earth gives too little, giving only bread,
To nourish pride or turn the weakest head:
To them, the sounding jargon of the schools,
Seems what it is, a cap and bells for fools:
The light they walk by, kindled from above,
Shows them the shortest way to life and love:
They, strangers to the controversial field,
Where deists always foil'd, yet scorn to yield,

And never check'd by what impedes the wise,
Believe, rush forward, and possess the prize.
Envy, ye great, the dull unletter'd small,
Ye have much cause for envy—but not all;
We boast some rich ones whom the gospel sways,
And one that wears a coronet and prays;
Like gleanings of an olive tree they show,
Here and there one upon the topmost bough.
How readily upon the gospel plan,
That question has its answer,—what is man?
Sinful and weak, in every sense a wretch,
An instrument whose chords upon the stretch
And strain'd to the last screw that he can bear,
Yield only discord in his Maker's ear:
Once the blest residence of truth divine,
Glorious as Solyma's interior shrine,
Where, in his own oracular abode,
Dwelt visibly the light-creating God;
But made long since, like Babylon of old,
A den of mischiefs never to be told:
And she once mistress of the realms around,
Now scattered wide and no where to be found,
As soon shall rise and reascend the throne,
By native power and energy her own,
As Nature at her own peculiar cost,
Restore to man the glories he has lost.
Go bid the winter cease to chill the year,
Replace the wandering comet in his sphere,
Then boast (but wait for that unhoped for hour)
The self-restoring arm of human power!
But what is man in his own proud esteem?
Hear him, himself the poet and the theme:

A monarch clothed with majesty and awe,
His mind his kingdom, and his will his law,
Grace in his mien and glory in his eyes,
Supreme on Earth and worthy of the skies,
Strength in his heart, dominion in his nod,
And, thunderbolts excepted, quite a God!

So sings he, charm'd with his own mind and form,
The song magnificent, the theme a worm!
Himself so much the source of his delight,
His Maker has no beauty in his sight.
See where he sits contemplative and fixt,
Pleasure and wonder in his features mixt:
His passions tamed and all at his control,
How perfect the composure of his soul!
Complacency has breathed a gentle gale
O'er all his thoughts, and swell'd his easy sail.
His books well trimm'd and in the gayest style,
Like regimented coxcombs rank and file,
Adorn his intellects as well as shelves,
And teach him notions splendid as themselves:
The Bible only stands neglected there,
Though that of all most worthy of his care;
And, like an infant, troublesome awake,
Is left to sleep for peace and quiet sake.

What shall the man deserve of humankind,
Whose happy skill and industry combined
Shall prove (what argument could never yet)
The Bible an imposture and a cheat?
The praises of the libertine profess'd,
The worst of men, and curses of the best.
Where should the living, weeping o'er his woes,
The dying, trembling at the awful close,

Where the betray'd, forsaken, and oppress'd,
The thousands whom the world forbids to rest,
Where should they find (those comforts at an end
The Scripture yields,) or hope to find, a friend?
Sorrow might muse herself to madness then,
And, seeking exile from the sight of men,
Bury herself in solitude profound,
Grow frantic with her pangs, and bite the ground.
Thus often Unbelief, grown sick of life,
Flies to the tempting pool, or felon knife;
The jury meet, the coroner is short,
And lunacy the verdict of the court;
Reverse the sentence, let the truth be known,
Such lunacy is ignorance alone:
They knew not, what some bishops may not know,
That Scripture is the only cure of woe:
That field of promise, how it flings abroad
Its odour o'er the Christian's thorny road!
The soul, reposing on assured relief,
Feels herself happy amidst all her grief,
Forgets her labour as she toils along,
Weeps tears of joy, and bursts into a song.

But the same word that, like the polish'd share,
Ploughs up the roots of a believer's care,
Kills too the flowery weeds, where'er they grow,
That bind the sinner's Bacchanalian brow.
Oh that unwelcome voice of heavenly love,
Sad messenger of mercy from above,
How does it grate upon his thankless ear,
Crippling his pleasures with the cramp of fear!
His will and judgement at continual strife,
That civil war imbitters all his life:

In vain he points his powers against the skies,
In vain he closes or averts his eyes,
Truth will intrude—she bids him yet beware,—
And shakes the sceptic in the scorner's chair.

Though various foes against the truth combine,
Pride above all opposes her design;
Pride, of a growth superior to the rest,
The subtlest serpent with the loftiest crest,
Swells at the thought, and kindling into rage,
Would hiss the cherub Mercy from the stage.

And is the soul indeed so lost,—she cries,
Fallen from her glory and too weak to rise,
Torpid and dull beneath a frozen zone,
Has she no spark that may be deem'd her own?
Grant her indebted to what zealots call
Grace undeserved, yet surely not for all;—
Some beams of rectitude she yet displays,
Some love of virtue and some power to praise;
Can lift herself above corporeal things,
And soaring on her own unborrow'd wings,
Possess herself of all that's good or true,
Assert the skies, and vindicate her due.
Past indiscretion is a venial crime,
And if the youth, unmellow'd yet by time,
Bore on his branch luxuriant then and rude,
Fruits of a blighted size, austere and crude,
Maturer years shall happier stores produce,
And meliorate the well concocted juice.
Then, conscious of her meritorious zeal,
To Justice she may make her bold appeal,
And leave to Mercy, with a tranquil mind,
The worthless and unfruitful of mankind.

Hear then how Mercy, slighted and defied,
Retorts the affront against the crown of Pride.
Perish the virtue, as it ought, abhorr'd,
And the fool with it that insults his Lord.
The atonement a Redeemer's love has wrought
Is not for you,—the righteous need it not.
Seest thou yon harlot wooing all she meets,
The worn-out nuisance of the public streets,
Herself from morn to night, from night to morn,
Her own abhorrence, and as much your scorn,
The gracious shower, unlimited and free,
Shall fall on her, when Heaven denies it thee.
Of all that wisdom dictates, this the drift,
That man is dead in sin, and life a gift.
Is virtue then, unless of Christian growth,
Mere fallacy, or foolishness, or both?
Ten thousand sages lost in endless woe,
For ignorance of what they could not know?
That speech betrays at once a bigot's tongue;
Charge not a God with such outrageous wrong!
Truly not I.—The partial light men have,
My creed persuades me, well employ'd may save:
While he that scorns the noonday beam, perverse,
Shall find the blessing unimproved a curse.
Let heathen worthies, whose exalted mind
Left sensuality and dross behind,
Possess for me their undisputed lot,
And take unenvied the reward they sought.
But still in virtue of a Saviour's plea,
Not blind by choice, but destined not to see.
Their fortitude and wisdom were a flame
Celestial, though they knew not whence it came.

Derived from the same source of light and grace,
That guides the Christian in his swifter race;
Their judge was Conscience, and her rule their law;
That rule, pursued with reverence and with awe,
Led them, however faltering, faint, and slow,
From what they knew, to what they wish'd to know.
But let not him that shares a brighter day,
Traduce the splendour of a noontide ray,
Prefer the twilight of a darker time,
And deem his base stupidity no crime;
The wretch, that slights the bounty of the skies,
And sinks while favour'd with the means to rise,
Shall find them rated at their full amount,
The good he scorn'd all carried to account.

Marshalling all his terrors as he came,
Thunder and earthquake and devouring flame,
From Sinai's top Jehovah gave the law,
Life for obedience, death for every flaw.
When the great Sovereign would his will express,
He gives a perfect rule; what can He less?
And guards it with a sanction as severe
As vengeance can inflict, or sinners fear:
Else his own glorious rights he would disclaim,
And man might safely trifle with his name.
He bids him glow with unremitting love
To all on earth, and to Himself above;
Condemns the injurious deed, the slanderous tongue,
The thought that meditates a brother's wrong;
Brings not alone the more conspicuous part,
His conduct to the test, but tries his heart.

Hark! universal Nature shook and groan'd;
'Twas the last trumpet—see the Judge enthroned!

Rouse all your courage at your utmost need,
Now summon every virtue, stand and plead.
What! silent? Is your boasting heard no more?
That self-renouncing wisdom, learn'd before,
Had shed immortal glories on your brow,
That all your virtues cannot purchase now.

All joy to the believer! he can speak,
Trembling yet happy, confident yet meek.
Since the dear hour, that brought me to thy foot,
And cut up all my follies by the root,
I never trusted in an arm but thine,
Nor hoped but in thy righteousness divine:
My prayers and alms, imperfect and defiled,
Were but the feeble efforts of a child;
Howe'er perform'd, it was their brightest part,
That they proceeded from a grateful heart;
Cleansed in thine own all-purifying blood,
Forgive their evil, and accept their good;
I cast them at thy feet—my only plea
Is what it was, dependance upon Thee;
While struggling in the vale of tears below,
That never fail'd, nor shall it fail me now.

Angelic gratulations rend the skies,
Pride falls unpitied, never more to rise,
Humility is crown'd, and Faith receives the prize.

EXPOSTULATION.

Tantane, tam patiens, nullo certamine tolli
Dona sines? VIRGIL.

WHY weeps the Muse for England? What appears
In England's case to move the Muse to tears?
From side to side of her delightful isle
Is she not clothed with a perpetual smile?
Can Nature add a charm, or art confer
A new-found luxury not seen in her?
Where under heaven is pleasure more pursued,
Or where does cold reflection less intrude?
Her fields a rich expanse of wavy corn
Pour'd out from Plenty's overflowing horn;
Ambrosial gardens in which Art supplies
The fervour and the force of Indian skies;
Her peaceful shores, where busy Commerce waits
To pour his golden tide through all her gates;
Whom fiery suns that scorch the russet spice
Of eastern groves, and oceans floor'd with ice,
Forbid in vain to push his daring way
To darker climes, or climes of brighter day;
Whom the winds waft where'er the billows roll,
From the world's girdle to the frozen pole;
The chariots bounding in her wheel-worn streets;
Her vaults below where every vintage meets;
Her theatres, her revels, and her sports,
The scenes to which not youth alone resorts,

But age, in spite of weakness and of pain,
Still haunts, in hope to dream of youth again;
All speak her happy:—let the Muse look round
From East to West, no sorrow can be found,
Or only what in cottages confined,
Sighs unregarded to the passing wind.
Then wherefore weep for England? What appears
In England's case to move the Muse to tears?
The prophet wept for Israel, wish'd his eyes
Were fountains fed with infinite supplies;
For Israel dealt in robbery and wrong,
There were the scorner's and the slanderer's tongue,
Oaths used as playthings or convenient tools,
As interest bias'd knaves, or fashion fools;
Adultery neighing at his neighbour's door,
Oppression labouring hard to grind the poor,
The partial balance and deceitful weight,
The treacherous smile, a mask for secret hate,
Hypocrisy, formality in prayer,
And the dull service of the lip were there.
Her women insolent and self-caress'd,
By Vanity's unwearied finger dress'd,
Forgot the blush that virgin fears impart
To modest cheeks, and borrow'd one from art;
Were just such trifles without worth or use,
As silly pride and idleness produce;
Curl'd, scented, furbelow'd, and flounced around,
With feet too delicate to touch the ground,
They stretch'd the neck, and roll'd the wanton eye,
And sigh'd for every fool that flutter'd by.
He saw his people slaves to every lust,
Lewd, avaricious, arrogant, unjust;

He heard the wheels of an avenging God
Groan heavily along the distant road;
Saw Babylon set wide her two-leaved brass
To let the military deluge pass;
Jerusalem a prey, her glory soil'd,
Her princes captive, and her treasures spoil'd;
Wept till all Israel heard his bitter cry,
Stamp'd with his foot, and smote upon his thigh;
But wept and stamp'd and smote his thigh in vain,
Pleasure is deaf when told of future pain,
And sounds prophetic are too rough to suit
Ears long accustom'd to the pleasing lute;
They scorn'd his inspiration and his theme,
Pronounced him frantic and his fears a dream,
With self-indulgence wing'd the fleeting hours,
Till the foe found them, and down fell the towers.

Long time Assyria bound them in her chain,
Till penitence had purged the public stain,
And Cyrus, with relenting pity moved,
Return'd them happy to the land they loved:
There, proof against prosperity, awhile
They stood the test of her ensnaring smile,
And had the grace in scenes of peace to show
The virtue they had learn'd in scenes of woe.
But man is frail, and can but ill sustain
A long immunity from grief and pain,
And after all the joys that plenty leads,
With tiptoe step vice silently succeeds.

When he that ruled them with a shepherd's rod,
In form a man, in dignity a God,
Came not expected in that humble guise,
To sift, and search them with unerring eyes,

He found, conceal'd beneath a fair outside,
The filth of rottenness and worm of pride,
Their piety a system of deceit,
Scripture employ'd to sanctify the cheat,
The pharisee the dupe of his own art,
Self-idolized, and yet a knave at heart.

When nations are to perish in their sins,
'Tis in the church the leprosy begins:
The priest whose office is, with zeal sincere,
To watch the fountain, and preserve it clear,
Carelessly nods and sleeps upon the brink,
While others poison what the flock must drink;
Or, waking at the call of lust alone,
Infuses lies and errors of his own:
His unsuspecting sheep believe it pure,
And, tainted by the very means of cure,
Catch from each other a contagious spot,
The foul forerunner of a general rot.
Then Truth is hush'd, that Heresy may preach;
And all is trash that Reason cannot reach;
Then God's own image on the soul impress'd
Becomes a mockery and a standing jest;
And faith, the root whence only can arise
The graces of a life that wins the skies,
Loses at once all value and esteem,
Pronounced by greybeards a pernicious dream;
Then ceremony leads her bigots forth,
Prepared to fight for shadows of no worth,
While truths, on which eternal things depend,
Find not, or hardly find, a single friend;
As soldiers watch the signal of command,
They learn to bow, to kneel, to sit, to stand;

Happy to fill religion's vacant place
With hollow form, and gesture, and grimace.
Such, when the Teacher of his church was there,
People and priest, the sons of Israel were,
Stiff in the letter, lax in the design
And import of their oracles divine,
Their learning legendary, false, absurd,
And yet exalted above God's own word,
They drew a curse from an intended good,
Puff'd up with gifts they never understood.
He judged them with as terrible a frown,
As if not love, but wrath had brought him down;
Yet he was gentle as soft summer airs,
Had grace for others' sins, but none for theirs.
Through all he spoke a noble plainness ran;
Rhetoric is artifice, the work of man,
And tricks and turns that fancy may devise,
Are far too mean for Him that rules the skies.
The astonish'd vulgar trembled while he tore
The mask from faces never seen before;
He stripp'd the impostors in the noonday sun,
Show'd that they follow'd all they seem'd to shun,
Their prayers made public, their excesses kept
As private as the chambers where they slept;
The temple and its holy rites profaned
By mummeries he that dwelt in it disdain'd;
Uplifted hands, that, at convenient times,
Could act extortion and the worst of crimes,
Wash'd with a neatness scrupulously nice,
And free from every taint but that of vice.
Judgement, however tardy, mends her pace
When Obstinacy once has conquer'd Grace.

They saw distemper heal'd, and life restored,
In answer to the fiat of his word,
Confess'd the wonder, and with daring tongue
Blasphemed the authority from which it sprung.
They knew by sure prognostics seen on high,
The future tone and temper of the sky,
But, grave dissemblers! could not understand,
That sin let loose speaks punishment at hand.
Ask now of history's authentic page,
And call up evidence from every age;
Display with busy and laborious hand
The blessings of the most indebted land;
What nation will you find whose annals prove
So rich an interest in almighty love?
Where dwell they now, where dwelt in ancient day,
A people planted, water'd, blest as they?
Let Egypt's plagues and Canaan's woes proclaim
The favours pour'd upon the Jewish name;
Their freedom purchased for them at the cost
Of all their hard oppressors valued most,
Their title to a country not their own
Made sure by prodigies till then unknown;
For them the state they left made waste and void,
For them the states to which they went destroy'd,
A cloud to measure out their march by day,
By night a fire to cheer the gloomy way,
That moving signal summoning, when best,
Their host to move, and, when it stay'd, to rest.
For them the rocks dissolved into a flood,
The dews condensed into angelic food,
Their very garments sacred, old yet new,
And Time forbid to touch them as he flew;

Streams, swell'd above the bank, enjoin'd to stand,
While they pass'd through to their appointed land;
Their leader arm'd with meekness zeal and love,
And graced with clear credentials from above;
Themselves secured beneath the Almighty wing;
Their God their captain[1], lawgiver, and king;
Crown'd with a thousand victories, and at last
Lords of the conquer'd soil, there rooted fast,
In peace possessing what they won by war,
Their name far publish'd, and revered as far;
Where will you find a race like theirs, endow'd
With all that man e'er wish'd, or Heaven bestow'd?

They and they only amongst all mankind
Received the transcript of the eternal mind,
Were trusted with his own engraven laws,
And constituted guardians of his cause;
Theirs were the prophets, theirs the priestly call,
And theirs by birth the Saviour of us all.
In vain the nations that had seen them rise
With fierce and envious yet admiring eyes,
Had sought to crush them, guarded as they were
By power divine and skill that could not err.
Had they maintain'd allegiance firm and sure,
And kept the faith immaculate and pure,
Then the proud eagles of all-conquering Rome
Had found one city not to be o'ercome,
And the twelve standards of the tribes unfurl'd
Had bid defiance to the warring world.
But grace abused brings forth the foulest deeds,
As richest soil the most luxuriant weeds;

[1] Vide Joshua, v. 14.

Cured of the golden calves, their fathers' sin,
They set up self, that idol-god, within;
View'd a Deliverer with disdain and hate,
Who left them still a tributary state;
Seized fast his hand, held out to set them free
From a worse yoke, and nail'd it to the tree.
There was the consummation and the crown,
The flower of Israel's infamy full blown;
Thence date their sad declension and their fall,
Their woes not yet repeal'd, thence date them all.
Thus fell the best instructed in her day,
And the most favour'd land, look where we may.
Philosophy indeed on Grecian eyes
Had pour'd the day, and clear'd the Roman skies:
In other climes perhaps creative art,
With power surpassing theirs, perform'd her part,
Might give more life to marble, or might fill
The glowing tablets with a juster skill,
Might shine in fable, and grace idle themes
With all the embroidery of poetic dreams;
'Twas theirs alone to dive into the plan,
That truth and mercy had reveal'd to man;
And while the world beside, that plan unknown,
Deified useless wood or senseless stone,
They breathed in faith their well-directed prayers.
And the true God, the God of truth, was theirs.
Their glory faded, and their race dispersed,
The last of nations now, though once the first,
They warn and teach the proudest, would they learn,
Keep wisdom, or meet vengeance in your turn!
If we escaped not, if Heaven spared not us,
Peel'd, scatter'd, and exterminated thus;

If Vice received her retribution due,
When we were visited, what hope for you?
When God arises with an aweful frown,
To punish lust, or pluck presumption down;
When gifts perverted, or not duly prized,
Pleasure o'ervalued, and his grace despised,
Provoke the vengeance of his righteous hand
To pour down wrath upon a thankless land,
He will be found impartially severe,
Too just to wink, or speak the guilty clear.
O Israel, of all nations most undone!
Thy diadem displaced, thy sceptre gone,
Thy temple, once thy glory, fallen and rased,
And thou a worshipper e'en where thou mayst;
Thy services once only without spot,
Mere shadows now, their ancient pomp forgot;
Thy Levites, once a consecrated host,
No longer Levites, and their lineage lost,
And thou thyself o'er every country sown,
With none on earth that thou canst call thine own;
Cry aloud, thou that sittest in the dust,
Cry to the proud, the cruel, and unjust,
Knock at the gates of nations, rouse their fears,
Say wrath is coming, and the storm appears;
But raise the shrillest cry in British ears.
What ails thee, restless as the waves that roar,
And fling their foam against thy chalky shore?
Mistress, at least while Providence shall please,
And trident-bearing queen of the wide seas,—
Why, having kept good faith, and often shown
Friendship and truth to others, find'st thou none?
Thou that hast set the persecuted free,
None interposes now to succour thee.

Countries indebted to thy power, that shine
With light derived from thee, would smother thine;
Thy very children watch for thy disgrace,—
A lawless brood, and curse thee to thy face:
Thy rulers load thy credit, year by year,
With sums Peruvian mines could never clear,
As if, like arches built with skilful hand,
The more 'twere press'd the firmer it would stand.
The cry in all thy ships is still the same,
Speed us away to battle and to fame!
Thy mariners explore the wild expanse,
Impatient to descry the flags of France,
But, though they fight as thine have ever fought,
Return ashamed without the wreaths they sought.
Thy senate is a scene of civil jar,
Chaos of contrarieties at war,
Where sharp and solid, phlegmatic and light,
Discordant atoms meet, ferment, and fight;
Where Obstinacy takes his sturdy stand,
To disconcert what Policy has plann'd;
Where Policy is busied all night long
In setting right what Faction has set wrong;
Where flails of oratory thresh the floor,
That yields them chaff and dust, and nothing more.
Thy rack'd inhabitants repine, complain,
Tax'd till the brow of Labour sweats in vain;
War lays a burden on the reeling state,
And Peace does nothing to relieve the weight:
Successive loads succeeding broils impose,
And sighing millions prophesy the close.
Is adverse Providence when ponder'd well,
So dimly writ or difficult to spell,

Thou canst not read with readiness and ease
Providence adverse in events like these?
Know then, that heavenly wisdom on this ball
Creates, gives birth to, guides, consummates all:
That, while laborious and quick-thoughted man
Snuffs up the praise of what he seems to plan,
He first conceives, then perfects his design,
As a mere instrument in hands divine:
Blind to the working of that secret power
That balances the wings of every hour,
The busy trifler dreams himself alone,
Frames many a purpose, and God works his own.
States thrive or wither as moons wax and wane,
Even as his will and his decrees ordain;
While honour, virtue, piety bear sway,
They flourish; and as these decline, decay.
In just resentment of his injured laws,
He pours contempt on them and on their cause;
Strikes the rough thread of error right athwart
The web of every scheme they have at heart,
Bids rottenness invade and bring to dust
The pillars of support in which they trust,
And do his errand of disgrace and shame
On the chief strength and glory of the frame.
None ever yet impeded what He wrought,
None bars Him out from his most secret thought;
Darkness itself before His eyes is light,
And Hell's close mischief naked in His sight.

Stand now and judge thyself.—Hast thou incurr'd
His anger who can waste thee with a word,
Who poises and proportions sea and land,
Weighing them in the hollow of his hand,

And in whose aweful sight all nations seem
As grasshoppers, as dust, a drop, a dream,
Hast thou (a sacrilege his soul abhors)
Claim'd all the glory of thy prosperous wars,
Proud of thy fleets and armies, stolen the gem
Of his just praise, to lavish it on them?
Hast thou not learn'd, what thou art often told,
A truth still sacred, and believed of old,
That no success attends on spears and swords
Unbless'd, and that the battle is the Lord's?
That Courage is his creature, and Dismay
The post that at his bidding speeds away,
Ghastly in feature, and his stammering tongue
With doleful rumour and sad presage hung,
To quell the valour of the stoutest heart,
And teach the combatant a woman's part?
That he bids thousands fly when none pursue,
Saves as he will by many or by few,
And claims for ever as his royal right,
The event and sure decision of the fight?

Hast thou, though suckled at fair Freedom's breast,
Exported slavery to the conquer'd East,
Pull'd down the tyrants India served with dread,
And raised thyself, a greater, in their stead?
Gone thither arm'd and hungry, return'd full,
Fed from the richest veins of the Mogul,
A despot big with power obtain'd by wealth,
And that obtain'd by rapine and by stealth?
With Asiatic vices stored thy mind,
But left their virtues and thine own behind,
And, having truck'd thy soul, brought home the fee,
To tempt the poor to sell himself to thee?

Hast thou by statute shoved from its design
The Saviour's feast, his own blest bread and wine,
And made the symbols of atoning grace
An office key, a picklock to a place,
That infidels may prove their title good
By an oath dipp'd in sacramental blood?
A blot that will be still a blot, in spite
Of all that grave apologists may write,
And though a Bishop toil to cleanse the stain,
He wipes and scours the silver cup in vain.
And hast thou sworn on every slight pretence,
Till perjuries are common as bad pence,
While thousands, careless of the damning sin,
Kiss the book's outside, who ne'er look within?[2]

[2] It is proper to insert here, from the first edition, (pp. 123-4,) a remarkable passage, for which the next paragraph was substituted in the second and all subsequent ones.

Hast thou admitted with a blind, fond trust,
The lie that burn'd thy fathers' bones to dust,
That first adjudged them heretics, then sent
Their souls to Heaven, and cursed them as they went?
The lie that Scripture strips of its disguise,
And execrates above all other lies,
The lie that claps a lock on mercy's plan,
And gives the key to you infirm old man,
Who once insconced in apostolic chair
Is deified, and sits omniscient there;
The lie that knows no kindred, owns no friend
But him that makes its progress his chief end,
That having spilt much blood, makes that a boast,
And canonizes him that sheds the most?
Away with charity that soothes a lie,
And thrusts the truth with scorn and anger by!

Hast thou, when Heaven has clothed thee with disgrace,
And, long provoked, repaid thee to thy face,
(For thou hast known eclipses, and endured
Dimness and anguish, all thy beams obscured,
When sin has shed dishonour on thy brow,
And never of a sabler hue than now;)
Hast thou with heart perverse and conscience sear'd,
Despising all rebuke, still persevered,
And, having chosen evil, scorn'd the voice
That cried, Repent! and gloried in thy choice?
Thy fastings, when calamity at last
Suggests the expedient of a yearly fast,
What mean they? Canst thou dream there is a power
In lighter diet at a later hour,
To charm to sleep the threatenings of the skies,
And hide past folly from all-seeing eyes?
The fast that wins deliverance, and suspends
The stroke that a vindictive God intends,
Is to renounce hypocrisy; to draw
Thy life upon the pattern of the law;

Shame on the candour and the gracious smile
Bestow'd on them that light the martyr's pile,
While insolent disdain in frowns express'd
Attends the tenets that endured that test!
Grant them the rights of men, and while they cease
To vex the peace of others, grant them peace;
But trusting bigots whose false zeal has made
Treachery their duty, thou art self-betrayed.

Cowper no doubt withdrew this striking passage in consequence of his having become intimate with the amiable family at Weston Hall.

To war with pleasures, idolized before;
To vanquish lust, and wear its yoke no more.
All fasting else, whate'er be the pretence,
Is wooing mercy by renew'd offence.

Hast thou within thee sins, that in old time
Brought fire from Heaven, the sex-abusing crime,
Whose horrid perpetration stamps disgrace
Baboons are free from, upon human race?
Think on the fruitful and well-water'd spot
That fed the flocks and herds of wealthy Lot,
Where Paradise seem'd still vouchsafed on earth,
Burning and scorch'd into perpetual dearth,
Or, in his words who damn'd the base desire,
Suffering the vengeance of eternal fire;
Then Nature injured, scandalized, defiled,
Unveil'd her blushing cheek, look'd on, and smiled;
Beheld with joy the lovely scene defaced,
And praised the wrath that laid her beauties waste.

Far be the thought from any verse of mine,
And farther still the form'd and fix'd design,
To thrust the charge of deeds that I detest,
Against an innocent unconscious breast:
The man that dares traduce, because he can
With safety to himself, is not a man.
An individual is a sacred mark,
Not to be pierced in play or in the dark;
But public censure speaks a public foe,
Unless a zeal for virtue guide the blow.

The priestly brotherhood, devout, sincere,
From mean self-interest and ambition clear,
Their hope in Heaven, servility their scorn,
Prompt to persuade, expostulate, and warn,

Their wisdom pure and given them from above,
Their usefulness ensured by zeal and love,
As meek as the man Moses, and withal
As bold as, in Agrippa's presence, Paul,
Should fly the world's contaminating touch,
Holy and unpolluted:—are thine such?
Except a few with Eli's spirit blest,
Hophni and Phineas may describe the rest.

Where shall a teacher look in days like these,
For ears and hearts that he can hope to please?
Look to the poor,—the simple and the plain
Will hear perhaps thy salutary strain:
Humility is gentle, apt to learn,
Speak but the word, will listen and return.
Alas, not so! the poorest of the flock
Are proud, and set their faces as a rock;
Denied that earthly opulence they chuse,
God's better gift they scoff at and refuse.
The rich, the produce of a nobler stem,
Are more intelligent at least,—try them.
O vain inquiry! they without remorse
Are altogether gone a devious course,
Where beckoning Pleasure leads them, wildly stray;
Have burst the bands, and cast the yoke away.

Now, borne upon the wings of truth sublime,
Review thy dim original and prime.
This island-spot of unreclaim'd rude earth,
The cradle that received thee at thy birth,
Was rock'd by many a rough Norwegian blast,
And Danish howlings scared thee as they pass'd;
For thou wast born amid the din of arms,
And suck'd a breast that panted with alarms.

While yet thou wast a groveling puling chit,
Thy bones not fashion'd, and thy joints not knit,
The Roman taught thy stubborn knee to bow,
Though twice a Cæsar could not bend thee now:
His victory was that of orient light,
When the sun's shafts disperse the gloom of night.
Thy language at this distant moment shows
How much the country to the conqueror owes:
Expressive, energetic, and refined,
It sparkles with the gems he left behind.
He brought thy land a blessing when he came,
He found thee savage, and he left thee tame;
Taught thee to clothe thy pink'd and painted hide,
And grace thy figure with a soldier's pride;
He sow'd the seeds of order where he went,
Improved thee far beyond his own intent,
And while he ruled thee by the sword alone,
Made thee at last a warrior like his own.
Religion, if in heavenly truths attired,
Needs only to be seen to be admired;
But thine, as dark as witcheries of the night,
Was form'd to harden hearts and shock the sight;
Thy Druids struck the well-strung harps they bore
With fingers deeply dyed in human gore;
And, while the victim slowly bled to death,
Upon the tolling chords rung out his dying breath.

Who brought the lamp that with awakening beams
Dispell'd thy gloom, and broke away thy dreams,
Tradition, now decrepid and worn out,
Babbler of ancient fables, leaves a doubt:
But still light reach'd thee; and those gods of thine,
Woden and Thor, each tottering in his shrine,

Fell broken and defaced at his own door,
As Dagon in Philistia long before.
But Rome with sorceries and magic wand
Soon raised a cloud that darken'd every land;
And thine was smother'd in the stench and fog
Of Tiber's marshes and the papal bog.
Then priests with bulls and briefs and shaven crowns,
And griping fists and unrelenting frowns,
Legates and delegates with powers from hell,
Though heavenly in pretension, fleeced thee well;
And to this hour, to keep it fresh in mind,
Some twigs of that old scourge are left behind[3].
Thy soldiery, the Pope's well managed pack,
Were train'd beneath his lash, and knew the smack,
And, when he laid them on the scent of blood,
Would hunt a Saracen through fire and flood.
Lavish of life to win an empty tomb,
That proved a mint of wealth, a mine to Rome,
They left their bones beneath unfriendly skies,
His worthless absolution all the prize.
Thou wast the veriest slave in days of yore,
That ever dragg'd a chain, or tugg'd an oar;
Thy monarchs arbitrary, fierce, unjust,
Themselves the slaves of bigotry or lust,
Disdain'd thy counsels, only in distress
Found thee a goodly spunge for Power to press.
Thy chiefs, the lords of many a petty fee,
Provoked and harass'd, in return plagued thee;
Call'd thee away from peaceable employ
Domestic happiness and rural joy,

[3] Which may be found at Doctors Commons. C.

To waste thy life in arms, or lay it down
In causeless feuds and bickerings of their own.
Thy parliaments adored on bended knees
The sovereignty they were convened to please;
Whate'er was ask'd, too timid to resist,
Complied with, and were graciously dismiss'd;
And if some Spartan soul a doubt express'd,
And, blushing at the tameness of the rest,
Dared to suppose the subject had a choice,
He was a traitor by the general voice.
O slave! with powers thou didst not dare exert,
Verse cannot stoop so low as thy desert!
It shakes the sides of splenetic Disdain,
Thou self-entitled ruler of the main,
To trace thee to the date when yon fair sea,
That clips thy shores, had no such charms for thee;
When other nations flew from coast to coast,
And thou hadst neither fleet nor flag to boast.

Kneel now, and lay thy forehead in the dust!
Blush if thou canst; not petrified, thou must;
Act but an honest and a faithful part;
Compare what then thou wast with what thou art;
And God's disposing providence confess'd,
Obduracy itself must yield the rest.—
Then thou art bound to serve him, and to prove,
Hour after hour, thy gratitude and love.

Has he not hid thee and thy favour'd land,
For ages safe beneath his sheltering hand,
Given thee his blessing on the clearest proof,
Bid nations leagued against thee stand aloof,
And charged Hostility and Hate to roar
Where else they would, but not upon thy shore?

His power secured thee, when presumptuous Spain
Baptized her fleet Invincible in vain;
Her gloomy monarch, doubtful and resign'd
To every pang that racks an anxious mind,
Ask'd of the waves that broke upon his coast,
What tidings? and the surge replied—All lost!
And when the Stuart leaning on the Scot,
Then too much feared, and now too much forgot,
Pierced to the very centre of thy realm,
And hoped to seize his abdicated helm,
'Twas but to prove how quickly with a frown
He that had raised thee could have pluck'd thee down.
Peculiar is the grace by thee possess'd,
Thy foes implacable, thy land at rest;
Thy thunders travel over earth and seas,
And all at home is pleasure, wealth, and ease.
'Tis thus, extending his tempestuous arm,
Thy Maker fills the nations with alarm,
While his own Heaven surveys the troubled scene,
And feels no change, unshaken and serene.
Freedom, in other lands scarce known to shine,
Pours out a flood of splendour upon thine;
Thou hast as bright an interest in her rays
As ever Roman had in Rome's best days.
True freedom is, where no restraint is known
That scripture, justice, and good sense disown,
Where only vice and injury are tied,
And all from shore to shore is free beside.
Such freedom is,—and Windsor's hoary towers
Stood trembling at the boldness of thy powers,
That won a nymph on that immortal plain,
Like her the fabled Phœbus woo'd in vain:

He found the laurel only;—happier you,
The unfading laurel and the virgin too[4]!
Now think, if Pleasure have a thought to spare,
If God himself be not beneath her care;
If business, constant as the wheels of time,
Can pause one hour to read a serious rhyme;
If the new mail thy merchants now receive,
Or expectation of the next give leave:
O, think, if chargeable with deep arrears
For such indulgence gilding all thy years,
How much, though long neglected, shining yet,
The beams of heavenly truth have swell'd the debt.
When persecuting zeal made royal sport
With tortured innocence in Mary's court,
And Bonner, blithe as shepherd at a wake,
Enjoy'd the show and danced about the stake;
The sacred book, its value understood,
Received the seal of martyrdom in blood.
Those holy men, so full of truth and grace,
Seem to reflection of a different race,
Meek, modest, venerable, wise, sincere,
In such a cause they could not dare to fear;
They could not purchase earth with such a prize,
Nor spare a life too short to reach the skies.
From them to thee, convey'd along the tide
Their streaming hearts pour'd freely when they died,
Those truths which neither use nor years impair,
Invite thee, woo thee, to the bliss they share.

[4] Alluding to the grant of Magna Charta, which was extorted from King John by the barons, at Runnymede, near Windsor. C.

What dotage will not Vanity maintain?
What web too weak to catch a modern brain?
The moles and bats in full assembly find,
On special search, the keen-eyed eagle blind.
And did they dream, and art thou wiser now?
Prove it:—if better, I submit and bow.
Wisdom and Goodness are twin born, one heart
Must hold both sisters, never seen apart.

So then,—as darkness overspread the deep,
Ere Nature rose from her eternal sleep,
And this delightful earth, and that fair sky,
Leap'd out of nothing, call'd by the Most High,
By such a change thy darkness is made light,
Thy chaos order, and thy weakness might;
And He, whose power mere nullity obeys,
Who found thee nothing, form'd thee for his praise.
To praise him is to serve him, and fulfil,
Doing and suffering, his unquestion'd will;
'Tis to believe what men inspired of old,
Faithful, and faithfully inform'd, unfold;
Candid and just, with no false aim in view,
To take for truth what cannot but be true,
To learn in God's own school the Christian part,
And bind the task assign'd thee to thine heart.
Happy the man there seeking and there found,
Happy the nation where such men abound.

How shall a verse impress thee? by what name
Shall I adjure thee not to court thy shame?
By theirs, whose bright example unimpeach'd
Directs thee to that eminence they reach'd,
Heroes and worthies of days past, thy sires?
Or His, who touch'd their heart with hallow'd fires?

Their names, alas! in vain reproach an age,
Whom all the vanities they scorn'd engage;
And His, that seraphs trembled at, is hung
Disgracefully on every trifler's tongue,
Or serves the champion in forensic war
To flourish and parade with at the bar.
Pleasure herself perhaps suggests a plea,
If interest move thee, to persuade even thee;
By every charm that smiles upon her face,
By joys possess'd, and joys still held in chace,
If dear society be worth a thought,
And if the feast of freedom cloy thee not,
Reflect that these and all that seems thine own,
Held by the tenure of his will alone,
Like angels in the service of their Lord,
Remain with thee, or leave thee at his word;
That gratitude and temperance in our use
Of what he gives unsparing and profuse,
Secure the favour, and enhance the joy,
That thankless waste and wild abuse destroy.

But above all reflect, how cheap soe'er
Those rights that millions envy thee, appear,
And though resolved to risk them, and swim down
The tide of pleasure heedless of His frown,
That blessings truly sacred, and when given,
Mark'd with the signature and stamp of Heaven,
The word of prophecy, those truths divine
Which make that Heaven, if thou desire it, thine,
(Aweful alternative! believed, beloved,
Thy glory; and thy shame if unimproved,)
Are never long vouchsafed, if push'd aside
With cold disgust or philosophic pride;

And that judicially withdrawn, disgrace,
Error and darkness occupy their place.
A world is up in arms, and thou a spot
Not quickly found if negligently sought,
Thy soul as ample as thy bounds are small,
Endurest the brunt, and darest defy them all:
And wilt thou join to this bold enterprize
A bolder still, a contest with the skies?
Remember, if He guard thee and secure,
Whoe'er assails thee, thy success is sure;
But if He leave thee, though the skill and power
Of nations, sworn to spoil thee and devour,
Were all collected in thy single arm,
And thou couldst laugh away the fear of harm,
That strength would fail opposed against the push
And feeble onset of a pigmy rush.
Say not (and if the thought of such defence
Should spring within thy bosom, drive it thence,)
What nation amongst all my foes is free
From crimes as base as any charged on me?
Their measure fill'd, they too shall pay the debt,
Which God, though long forborn, will not forget.
But know that Wrath divine, when most severe,
Makes justice still the guide of his career,
And will not punish in one mingled crowd,
Them without light, and thee without a cloud.
Muse, hang this harp upon yon aged beech,
Still murmuring with the solemn truths I teach,
And while at intervals a cold blast sings
Through the dry leaves, and pants upon the strings,
My soul shall sigh in secret, and lament
A nation scourged, yet tardy to repent.

I know the warning song is sung in vain,
That few will hear and fewer heed the strain;
But if a sweeter voice, and one design'd
A blessing to my country and mankind,
Reclaim the wandering thousands, and bring home
A flock so scattered and so wont to roam,
Then place it once again between my knees;
The sound of truth will then be sure to please:
And truth alone, where'er my life be cast,
In scenes of plenty or the pining waste,
Shall be my chosen theme, my glory to the last.

HOPE.

—— *doceas iter, et sacra ostia pandas.*
VIRG. Ec. 6.

ASK what is human life—the sage replies,
With disappointment lowering in his eyes,
A painful passage o'er a restless flood,
A vain pursuit of fugitive false good,
A scene of fancied bliss and heartfelt care,
Closing at last in darkness and despair.
The poor, inured to drudgery and distress,
Act without aim, think little, and feel less,
And no where, but in feign'd Arcadian scenes,
Taste happiness, or know what pleasure means.
Riches are pass'd away from hand to hand,
As fortune, vice, or folly may command;

As in a dance the pair that take the lead
Turn downward, and the lowest pair succeed,
So shifting and so various is the plan,
By which Heaven rules the mixt affairs of man:
Vicissitude wheels round the motley crowd,
The rich grow poor, the poor become purse-proud;
Business is labour, and man's weakness such,
Pleasure is labour too, and tires as much;
The very sense of it foregoes its use,
By repetition pall'd, by age obtuse.
Youth lost in dissipation, we deplore,
Through life's sad remnant, what no sighs restore;
Our years, a fruitless race without a prize,
Too many, yet too few to make us wise.
Dangling his cane about, and taking snuff,
Lothario cries, What philosophic stuff!
O querulous and weak!—whose useless brain
Once thought of nothing, and now thinks in vain;
Whose eye reverted weeps o'er all the past,
Whose prospect shows thee a disheartening waste;
Would age in thee resign his wintry reign,
And youth invigorate that frame again,
Renew'd desire would grace with other speech
Joys always prized, when placed within our reach.
For lift thy palsied head, shake off the gloom
That overhangs the borders of thy tomb,
See Nature gay as when she first began,
With smiles alluring her admirer man;
She spreads the morning over eastern hills,
Earth glitters with the drops the night distils,
The sun obedient at her call appears,
To fling his glories o'er the robe she wears,

Banks clothed with flowers, groves fill'd with sprightly
sounds,
The yellow tilth, green meads, rocks, rising grounds,
Streams edged with osiers, fattening every field
Where'er they flow, now seen and now conceal'd;
From the blue rim where skies and mountains meet,
Down to the very turf beneath thy feet,
Ten thousand charms, that only fools despise,
Or pride can look at with indifferent eyes,
All speak one language, all with one sweet voice
Cry to her universal realm, Rejoice!
Man feels the spur of passions and desires,
And she gives largely more than he requires;
Not that his hours devoted all to Care,
Hollow-eyed Abstinence, and lean Despair,
The wretch may pine, while to his smell, taste, sight,
She holds a Paradise of rich delight;
But gently to rebuke his awkward fear,
To prove that what she gives, she gives sincere,
To banish hesitation, and proclaim
His happiness, her dear, her only aim.
'Tis grave Philosophy's absurdest dream,
That Heaven's intentions are not what they seem,
That only shadows are dispensed below,
And earth has no reality but woe.

Thus things terrestrial wear a different hue,
As youth or age persuades; and neither true:
So Flora's wreath through colour'd crystal seen,
The rose or lily appears blue or green,
But still the imputed tints are those alone
The medium represents, and not their own.

To rise at noon, sit slipshod and undress'd,
To read the news, or fiddle, as seems best,
Till half the world comes rattling at his door,
To fill the dull vacuity till four;
And just when evening turns the blue vault grey,
To spend two hours in dressing for the day;
To make the Sun a bauble without use,
Save for the fruits his heavenly beams produce,
Quite to forget, or deem it worth no thought,
Who bids him shine, or if he shine or not;
Through mere necessity to close his eyes
Just when the larks and when the shepherds rise;
Is such a life, so tediously the same,
So void of all utility or aim,
That poor Jonquil with almost every breath
Sighs for his exit, vulgarly called death;
For he, with all his follies, has a mind
Not yet so blank, or fashionably blind,
But now and then perhaps a feeble ray
Of distant wisdom shoots across his way,
By which he reads, that life without a plan,
As useless as the moment it began,
Serves merely as a soil for discontent
To thrive in; an incumbrance ere half spent.
Oh weariness beyond what asses feel,
That tread the circuit of the cistern wheel;
A dull rotation, never at a stay,
Yesterday's face twin image of to-day;
While conversation, an exhausted stock,
Grows drowsy as the clicking of a clock.
No need, he cries, of gravity stuff'd out
With academic dignity devout,

To read wise lectures, vanity the text:
Proclaim the remedy, ye learned, next;
For truth self-evident with pomp impress'd
Is vanity surpassing all the rest.

That remedy, not hid in deeps profound,
Yet seldom sought where only to be found,
While passion turns aside from its due scope
The inquirer's aim, that remedy is Hope.
Life is His gift, from whom whate'er life needs,
And every good and perfect gift proceeds;
Bestow'd on man, like all that we partake,
Royally, freely, for his bounty's sake;
Transient, indeed, as is the fleeting hour,
And yet the seed of an immortal flower,
Design'd in honour of his endless love,
To fill with fragrance his abode above:
No trifle, howsoever short it seem,
And, howsoever shadowy, no dream;
Its value what no thought can ascertain,
Nor all an angel's eloquence explain.

Men deal with life, as children with their play,
Who first misuse, then cast their toys away;
Live to no sober purpose, and contend
That their Creator had no serious end.
When God and man stand opposite in view,
Man's disappointment must of course ensue.
The just Creator condescends to write,
In beams of inextinguishable light,
His names of wisdom, goodness, power, and love,
On all that blooms below or shines above,
To catch the wandering notice of mankind,
And teach the world, if not perversely blind,

His gracious attributes, and prove the share
His offspring hold in his paternal care.
If, led from earthly things to things divine,
His creature thwart not his august design,
Then praise is heard instead of reasoning pride,
And captious cavil and complaint subside.
Nature, employ'd in her allotted place,
Is handmaid to the purposes of Grace;
By good vouchsafed makes known superior good,
And bliss not seen by blessings understood:
That bliss reveal'd in Scripture, with a glow
Bright as the covenant-ensuring bow,
Fires all his feelings with a noble scorn
Of sensual evil, and thus Hope is born.

Hope sets the stamp of vanity on all
That men have deem'd substantial since the fall,
Yet has the wondrous virtue to educe
From emptiness itself a real use;
And while she takes, as at a father's hand,
What health and sober appetite demand,
From fading good derives, with chemic art,
That lasting happiness, a thankful heart.
Hope with uplifted foot set free from earth,
Pants for the place of her ethereal birth,
On steady wings sails through the immense abyss,
Plucks amaranthine joys from bowers of bliss,
And crowns the soul, while yet a mourner here,
With wreaths like those triumphant spirits wear.
Hope, as an anchor firm and sure, holds fast
The Christian vessel, and defies the blast.
Hope! nothing else can nourish and secure
His newborn virtues, and preserve him pure;

Hope! let the wretch, once conscious of the joy,
Whom now despairing agonies destroy,
Speak, for he can, and none so well as he,
What treasures centre, what delights in thee.
Had he the gems, the spices, and the land
That boasts the treasure, all at his command,
The fragrant grove, the inestimable mine,
Were light, when weigh'd against one smile of thine.

Though clasp'd and cradled in his nurse's arms,
He shine with all a cherub's artless charms,
Man is the genuine offspring of revolt,
Stubborn and sturdy, a wild ass's colt;
His passions, like the watery stores that sleep
Beneath the smiling surface of the deep,
Wait but the lashes of a wintry storm,
To frown and roar, and shake his feeble form.
From infancy through childhood's giddy maze,
Froward at school, and fretful in his plays,
The puny tyrant burns to subjugate
The free republic of the whip-gig state.
If one, his equal in athletic frame,
Or, more provoking still, of nobler name,
Dare step across his arbitrary views,
An Iliad, only not in verse, ensues:
The little Greeks look trembling at the scales,
Till the best tongue, or heaviest hand prevails.

Now see him launch'd into the world at large;
If priest, supinely droning o'er his charge,
Their fleece his pillow, and his weekly drawl,
Though short, too long, the price he pays for all.
If lawyer, loud whatever cause he plead,
But proudest of the worst, if that succeed.

Perhaps a grave physician, gathering fees,
Punctually paid for lengthening out disease;
No Cotton, whose humanity sheds rays
That make superior skill his second praise.
If arms engage him, he devotes to sport
His date of life, so likely to be short;
A soldier may be any thing, if brave;
So may a tradesman, if not quite a knave.
Such stuff the world is made of; and mankind
To passion, interest, pleasure, whim resign'd,
Insist on, as if each were his own Pope,
Forgiveness and the privilege of hope.
But Conscience, in some awful silent hour,
When captivating lusts have lost their power,
Perhaps when sickness, or some fearful dream,
Reminds him of religion, hated theme!
Starts from the down on which she lately slept,
And tells of laws despised, at least not kept,
Shows with a pointing finger and no noise,
A pale procession of past sinful joys,
All witnesses of blessings foully scorn'd,
And life abused,—and not to be suborn'd.
Mark these, she says; these, summon'd from afar,
Begin their march to meet thee at the bar;
There find a Judge inexorably just,
And perish there, as all presumption must.
Peace be to those (such peace as earth can give,)
Who live in pleasure, dead even while they live;
Born capable indeed of heavenly truth,
But down to latest age from earliest youth,
Their mind a wilderness through want of care,
The plough of wisdom never entering there.

Peace (if insensibility may claim
A right to the meek honours of her name,)
To men of pedigree; their noble race,
Emulous always of the nearest place
To any throne, except the throne of grace.
Let cottagers and unenlighten'd swains
Revere the laws they dream that Heaven ordains,
Resort on Sundays to the house of prayer,
And ask, and fancy they find blessings there;
Themselves, perhaps, when weary they retreat
To enjoy cool nature in a country seat,
To exchange the centre of a thousand trades,
For clumps, and lawns, and temples, and cascades,
May now and then their velvet cushions take,
And seem to pray, for good example sake;
Judging, in charity no doubt, the town
Pious enough, and having need of none.
Kind souls! to teach their tenantry to prize
What they themselves, without remorse, despise:
Nor hope have they nor fear of aught to come,
As well for them had prophecy been dumb;
They could have held the conduct they pursue,
Had Paul of Tarsus lived and died a Jew;
And truth, proposed to reasoners wise as they,
Is a pearl cast—completely cast away.

They die.—Death lends them, pleased and as in sport,
All the grim honours of his ghastly court.
Far other paintings grace the chamber now,
Where late we saw the mimic landscape glow:
The busy heralds hang the sable scene
With mournful scutcheons and dim lamps between,
Proclaim their titles to the crowd around,
But they that wore them move not at the sound;

The coronet placed idly at their head,
Adds nothing now to the degraded dead,
And even the star that glitters on the bier
Can only say—Nobility lies here.
Peace to all such!—'twere pity to offend
By useless censure whom we cannot mend;
Life without hope can close but in despair,
'Twas there we found them, and must leave them there.

As when two pilgrims in a forest stray,
Both may be lost, yet each in his own way,
So fares it with the multitudes beguiled
In vain opinion's waste and dangerous wild;
Ten thousand rove the brakes and thorns among,
Some eastward, and some westward, and all wrong.
But here, alas! the fatal difference lies,
Each man's belief is right in his own eyes;
And he that blames what they have blindly chose,
Incurs resentment for the love he shows.

Say botanist! within whose province fall
The cedar and the hyssop on the wall,
Of all that deck the lanes, the fields, the bowers,
What parts the kindred tribes of weeds and flowers?
Sweet scent, or lovely form, or both combined,
Distinguish every cultivated kind;
The want of both denotes a meaner breed,
And Chloe from her garland picks the weed.
Thus hopes of every sort, whatever sect
Esteem them, sow them, rear them, and protect,
If wild in nature, and not duly found,
Gethsemane! in thy dear hallowed ground,
That cannot bear the blaze of Scripture light,
Nor cheer the spirit, nor refresh the sight,

Nor animate the soul to Christian deeds,
(Oh, cast them from thee!) are weeds, arrant weeds.
Ethelred's house, the centre of six ways,
Diverging each from each, like equal rays,
Himself as bountiful as April rains,
Lord paramount of the surrounding plains,
Would give relief of bed and board to none
But guests that sought it in the appointed ONE.
And they might enter at his open door,
Even till his spacious hall would hold no more.
He sent a servant forth by every road,
To sound his horn, and publish it abroad,
That all might mark—knight, menial, high and low,
An ordinance it concern'd them much to know.
If after all, some headstrong hardy lout
Would disobey, though sure to be shut out,
Could he with reason murmur at his case,
Himself sole author of his own disgrace?
No! the decree was just and without flaw,
And he that made had right to make the law;
His sovereign power and pleasure unrestrain'd,
The wrong was his who wrongfully complain'd.
Yet half mankind maintain a churlish strife
With Him, the Donor of eternal life,
Because the deed, by which his love confirms
The largess he bestows, prescribes the terms.
Compliance with his will your lot ensures,
Accept it only, and the boon is yours:
And sure it is as kind to smile and give,
As with a frown to say, Do this, and live.
Love is not pedler's trumpery bought and sold,
He *will* give freely, or he *will* withhold;

His soul abhors a mercenary thought,
And him as deeply who abhors it not.
He stipulates indeed, but merely this,
That man will freely take an unbought bliss,
Will trust him for a faithful generous part,
Nor set a price upon a willing heart.
Of all the ways that seem to promise fair
To place you where his saints his presence share,
This only can; for this plain cause, express'd
In terms as plain, Himself has shut the rest.
But oh the strife, the bickering, and debate
The tidings of unpurchased Heaven create!
The flirted fan, the bridle, and the toss,
All speakers, yet all language at a loss.
From stuccoed walls smart arguments rebound;
And beaus, adepts in every thing profound,
Die of disdain, or whistle off the sound.
Such is the clamour of rooks, daws, and kites,
The explosion of the levell'd tube excites,
Where mouldering abbey walls o'erhang the glade,
And oaks coeval spread a mournful shade;
The screaming nations, hovering in mid air,
Loudly resent the stranger's freedom there,
And seem to warn him never to repeat
His bold intrusion on their dark retreat.
Adieu, Vinoso cries, ere yet he sips
The purple bumper trembling at his lips,
Adieu to all morality! if Grace
Make works a vain ingredient in the case.
The Christian hope is—Waiter, draw the cork—
If I mistake not—Blockhead! with a fork!
Without good works, whatever some may boast,
Mere folly and delusion—Sir, your toast.

My firm persuasion is, at least sometimes,
That Heaven will weigh man's virtues and his crimes
With nice attention in a righteous scale,
And save or damn as these or those prevail.
I plant my foot upon this ground of trust,
And silence every fear with—God is just.
But if perchance on some dull drizzling day
A thought intrude, that says, or seems to say,
If thus the important cause is to be tried,
Suppose the beam should dip on the wrong side?
I soon recover from these needless frights,
And God is merciful—sets all to rights.
Thus, between justice, as my prime support,
And mercy, fled to as the last resort,
I glide and steal along with heaven in view,
And,—pardon me, the bottle stands with you.
  I never will believe, the colonel cries,
The sanguinary schemes that some devise,
Who make the good Creator on their plan
A being of less equity than man.
If appetite, or what divines call lust,
Which men comply with even because they must,
Be punish'd with perdition, who is pure?
Then theirs, no doubt, as well as mine is sure.
If sentence of eternal pain belong
To every sudden slip and transient wrong,
Then Heaven enjoins the fallible and frail
A hopeless task, and damns them if they fail.
My creed (whatever some creed-makers mean
By Athanasian nonsense, or Nicene,)
My creed is, he is safe that does his best,
And death's a doom sufficient for the rest.

Right, says an ensign; and, for aught I see,
Your faith and mine substantially agree:
The best of every man's performance here
Is to discharge the duties of his sphere.
A lawyer's dealing should be just and fair,
Honesty shines with great advantage there.
Fasting and prayer sit well upon a priest,
A decent caution and reserve at least.
A soldier's best is courage in the field,
With nothing here that wants to be conceal'd;
Manly deportment, gallant, easy, gay;
A hand as liberal as the light of day;
The soldier thus endow'd, who never shrinks,
Nor closets up his thought whate'er he thinks,
Who scorns to do an injury by stealth,
Must go to Heaven—and I must drink his health.
Sir Smug! he cries, (for lowest at the board,
Just made fifth chaplain of his patron lord,
His shoulders witnessing by many a shrug
How much his feelings suffer'd, sat Sir Smug,)
Your office is to winnow false from true;
Come, prophet, drink, and tell us what think you!
Sighing and smiling as he takes his glass,
Which they that woo preferment rarely pass,
Fallible man, the church-bred youth replies,
Is still found fallible, however wise;
And differing judgements serve but to declare
That truth lies somewhere, if we knew but where.
Of all it ever was my lot to read
Of critics now alive or long since dead,
The book of all the world that charmed me most
Was,—well-a-day, the title-page was lost.

The writer well remarks, a heart that knows
To take with gratitude what Heaven bestows,
With prudence always ready at our call,
To guide our use of it, is all in all.
Doubtless it is.—To which, of my own store,
I superadd a few essentials more;
But these, excuse the liberty I take,
I waive just now, for conversation sake.—
Spoke like an oracle, they all exclaim,
And add Right Reverend to Smug's honour'd name.
And yet our lot is given us in a land
Where busy arts are never at a stand;
Where Science points her telescopic eye,
Familiar with the wonders of the sky;
Where bold Inquiry, diving out of sight,
Brings many a precious pearl of truth to light;
Where nought eludes the persevering quest
That fashion, taste, or luxury suggest.
But above all, in her own light array'd,
See Mercy's grand apocalypse display'd!
The sacred book no longer suffers wrong,
Bound in the fetters of an unknown tongue,
But speaks with plainness art could never mend,
What simplest minds can soonest comprehend.
God gives the word, the preachers throng around,
Live from his lips, and spread the glorious sound:
That sound bespeaks Salvation on her way,
The trumpet of a life-restoring day;
'Tis heard where England's eastern glory shines,
And in the gulfs of her Cornubian mines.
And still it spreads. See Germany send forth
Her sons[1] to pour it on the farthest north;

[1] The Moravian missionaries in Greenland. Vide Krantz. C.

Fired with a zeal peculiar, *they* defy
The rage and rigour of a polar sky,
And plant successfully sweet Sharon's rose
On icy plains and in eternal snows.
Oh bless'd within the enclosure of your rocks,
Nor herds have ye to boast, nor bleating flocks,
No fertilizing streams your fields divide,
That show reversed the villas on their side;
No groves have ye; no cheerful sound of bird,
Or voice of turtle in your land is heard;
Nor grateful eglantine regales the smell
Of those that walk at evening where ye dwell;
But Winter, arm'd with terrors here unknown,
Sits absolute on his unshaken throne,
Piles up his stores amidst the frozen waste,
And bids the mountains he has built, stand fast;
Beckons the legions of his storms away
From happier scenes, to make your land a prey,
Proclaims the soil a conquest he has won,
And scorns to share it with the distant Sun.
—Yet Truth is yours, remote unenvied isle!
And peace, the genuine offspring of her smile;
The pride of letter'd ignorance, that binds
In chains of error our accomplish'd minds,
That decks with all the splendour of the true,
A false religion, is unknown to you.
Nature indeed vouchsafes for our delight
The sweet vicissitudes[2] of day and night;
Soft airs and genial moisture feed and cheer
Field, fruit, and flower, and every creature here;

[2] Grateful vicissitude, like day and night.
Paradise Lost, vi. 8.

But brighter beams than his who fires the skies
Have risen at length on your admiring eyes,
That shoot into your darkest caves the day
From which our nicer optics turn away.

Here see the encouragement Grace gives to vice,
The dire effect of mercy without price!
What were they? what some fools are made by art
They were by nature, atheists, head and heart.
The gross idolatry blind heathens teach
Was too refined for them, beyond their reach.
Not even the glorious sun, though men revere
The monarch most that seldom will appear,
And though his beams that quicken where they shine,
May claim some right to be esteem'd divine,—
Not even the sun, desirable as rare,
Could bend one knee, engage one votary there;
They were, what base credulity believes
True Christians are, dissemblers, drunkards, thieves.
The full-gorged savage at his nauseous feast
Spent half the darkness, and snored out the rest,—
Was one whom justice, on an equal plan
Denouncing death upon the sins of man,
Might almost have indulged with an escape,
Chargeable only with a human shape.

What are they now?—Morality may spare
Her grave concern, her kind suspicions there.
The wretch that once sang wildly, danced, and laugh'd,
And suck'd in dizzy madness with his draught,
Has wept a silent flood, reversed his ways,
Is sober, meek, benevolent, and prays;
Feeds sparingly, communicates his store,
Abhors the craft he boasted of before,
And he that stole has learn'd to steal no more.

Well spake the prophet, Let the desert sing,
Where sprang the thorn the spiry fir shall spring,
And where unsightly and rank thistles grew,
Shall grow the myrtle and luxuriant yew.
Go now, and with important tone demand
On what foundation virtue is to stand,
If self-exalting claims be turn'd adrift,
And grace be grace indeed, and life a gift:
The poor reclaim'd inhabitant, his eyes
Glistening at once with pity and surprise,
Amazed that shadows should obscure the sight
Of one whose birth was in a land of light,
Shall answer, Hope, sweet Hope, has set me free,
And made all pleasures else mere dross to me.
These, amidst scenes as waste as if denied
The common care that waits on all beside,
Wild as if Nature there, void of all good,
Play'd only gambols in a frantic mood,
(Yet charge not heavenly skill with having plann'd
A plaything world, unworthy of his hand);
Can see his love, though secret evil lurks
In all we touch, stamp'd plainly on his works;
Deem life a blessing with its numerous woes,
Nor spurn away a gift a God bestows.
Hard task indeed o'er arctic seas to roam!
Is hope exotic? grows it not at home?
Yes; but an object bright as orient morn
May press the eye too closely to be borne;
A distant virtue we can all confess,
It hurts our pride and moves our envy less.
Leuconomus (beneath well sounding Greek
I slur a name a poet must not speak,)

Stood pilloried on infamy's high stage,
And bore the pelting scorn of half an age,
The very butt of slander, and the blot
For every dart that malice ever shot.
The man that mention'd *him*, at once dismiss'd
All mercy from his lips, and sneer'd and hiss'd;
His crimes were such as Sodom never knew,
And Perjury stood up to swear all true;
His aim was mischief, and his zeal pretence,
His speech rebellion against common sense;
A knave, when tried on honesty's plain rule,
And when by that of reason, a mere fool,
The world's best comfort was, his doom was pass'd,
Die when he might, he must be damn'd at last.

Now, Truth, perform thine office; waft aside
The curtain drawn by prejudice and pride,
Reveal (the man is dead) to wondering eyes
This more than monster in his proper guise.

He loved the world that hated him; the tear
That dropp'd upon his Bible was sincere.
Assail'd by scandal and the tongue of strife,
His only answer was a blameless life,
And he that forged and he that threw the dart,
Had each a brother's interest in his heart.
Paul's love of Christ, and steadiness unbribed,
Were copied close in him, and well transcribed;
He follow'd Paul; his zeal a kindred flame,
His apostolic charity the same,
Like him, cross'd cheerfully tempestuous seas,
Forsaking country, kindred, friends, and ease;
Like him he labour'd, and like him content
To bear it, suffer'd shame where'er he went.

Blush, Calumny; and write upon his tomb,
If honest eulogy can spare thee room,
Thy deep repentance of thy thousand lies,
Which, aim'd at him, have pierced the offended skies;
And say, Blot out my sin, confess'd, deplored,
Against thine image in thy saint, O Lord!

No blinder bigot, I maintain it still,
Than he who must have pleasure, come what will:
He laughs, whatever weapon Truth may draw,
And deems her sharp artillery mere straw.
Scripture indeed is plain, but God and he
On scripture ground are sure to disagree;
Some wiser rule must teach him how to live
Than that his Maker has seen fit to give,
Supple and flexible as Indian cane,
To take the bend his appetites ordain,
Contrived to suit frail nature's crazy ease,
And reconcile his lusts with saving grace.
By this, with nice precision of design,
He draws upon life's map a zigzag line,
That shows how far 'tis safe to follow sin,
And where his danger and God's wrath begin.
By this he forms, as pleased he sports along,
His well-poised estimate of right and wrong,
And finds the modish manners of the day,
Though loose, as harmless as an infant's play.

Build by whatever plan caprice decrees,
With what materials, on what ground you please,
Your hope shall stand unblamed, perhaps admired,
If not that hope the Scripture has required:
The strange conceits, vain projects, and wild dreams,
With which hypocrisy for ever teems,

(Though other follies strike the public eye,
And raise a laugh), pass unmolested by;
But if, unblameable in word and thought,
A *man* arise, a man whom God has taught,
With all Elijah's dignity of tone,
And all the love of the beloved John,
To storm the citadels they build in air,
And smite the untemper'd wall, 'tis death to spare,
To sweep away all refuges of lies,
And place, instead of quirks themselves devise,
LAMA SABACTHANI before their eyes,—
To prove that without Christ all gain is loss,
All hope despair, that stands not on his cross,—
Except the few his God may have impress'd,
A tenfold frenzy seizes all the rest.

Throughout mankind, the Christian kind at least,
There dwells a consciousness in every breast,
That folly ends where genuine hope begins,
And he that finds his heaven must lose his sins.
Nature opposes with her utmost force
This riving stroke, this ultimate divorce,
And, while religion seems to be her view,
Hates with a deep sincerity *the true:*
For this, of all that ever influenced man,
Since Abel worshipp'd, or the world began,
This only spares no lust, admits no plea,
But makes him, if at all, completely free;
Sounds forth the signal, as she mounts her car,
Of an eternal, universal war;
Rejects all treaty, penetrates all wiles,
Scorns with the same indifference frowns and smiles,
Drives through the realms of Sin, where Riot reels,
And grinds his crown beneath her burning wheels!

Hence all that is in man, pride, passion, art,
Powers of the mind, and feelings of the heart,
Insensible of Truth's almighty charms,
Starts at her first approach, and sounds to arms!
While Bigotry, with well dissembled fears,
His eyes shut fast, his fingers in his ears,
Mighty to parry and push by God's word
With senseless noise, his argument the sword,
Pretends a zeal for godliness and grace,
And spits abhorrence in the Christian's face.

Parent of Hope, immortal Truth, make known
Thy deathless wreaths, and triumphs all thine own!
The silent progress of thy power is such,
Thy means so feeble, and despised so much,
That few believe the wonders thou hast wrought,
And none can teach them but whom thou hast taught.
Oh see me sworn to serve thee, and command
A painter's skill into a poet's hand,
That while I trembling trace a work divine,
Fancy may stand aloof from the design,
And light and shade and every stroke be thine.

If ever thou hast felt another's pain,
If ever when he sigh'd, hast sigh'd again,
If ever on thine eyelid stood the tear
That pity had engender'd[3], drop one here.
This man was happy,—had the world's good word,
And with it every joy it can afford;

[3] True is it that we have seen better days,
And have with holy bell been knoll'd to church,
And sate at good men's feasts, and wiped our eyes
Of drops that sacred pity hath engender'd.
As You Like It.

Friendship and love seem'd tenderly at strife,
Which most should sweeten his untroubled life;
Politely learn'd, and of a gentle race,
Good breeding and good sense gave all a grace,
And whether at the toilet of the fair
He laugh'd and trifled, made him welcome there;
Or if in masculine debate he shared,
Ensured him mute attention and regard.
Alas how changed! expressive of his mind,
His eyes are sunk, arms folded, head reclined;
Those aweful syllables, hell, death, and sin,
Though whisper'd, plainly tell what works within,
That conscience there performs her proper part,
And writes a doomsday sentence on his heart.
Forsaking, and forsaken of all friends,
He now perceives where earthly pleasure ends;
Hard task! for one who lately knew no care,
And harder still as learn'd beneath despair:
His hours no longer pass unmark'd away,
A dark importance saddens every day;
He hears the notice of the clock, perplex'd,
And cries, Perhaps eternity strikes next;
Sweet music is no longer music here,
And laughter sounds like madness in his ear;
His grief the world of all her power disarms,
Wine has no taste, and beauty has no charms:
God's holy word, once trivial in his view,
Now by the voice of his experience true,
Seems, as it is, the fountain whence alone
Must spring that hope he pants to make his own.

Now let the bright reverse be known abroad;
Say, man's a worm, and power belongs to God.

As when a felon, whom his country's laws
Have justly doom'd for some atrocious cause,
Expects in darkness and heart-chilling fears,
The shameful close of all his mispent years,
If chance, on heavy pinions slowly borne,
A tempest usher in the dreaded morn,
Upon his dungeon walls the lightnings play,
The thunder seems to summon him away,
The warder at the door his key applies,
Shoots back the bolt, and all his courage dies:
If then, just then, all thoughts of mercy lost,
When hope, long lingering, at last yields the ghost,
The sound of pardon pierce his startled ear,
He drops at once his fetters and his fear,
A transport glows in all he looks and speaks,
And the first thankful tears bedew his cheeks:
Joy, far superior joy, that much outweighs
The comfort of a few poor added days,
Invades, possesses, and o'erwhelms the soul
Of him whom hope has with a touch made whole.
'Tis heaven, all heaven descending on the wings
Of the glad legions of the King of kings;
'Tis more,—'tis God diffused through every part,
'Tis God himself triumphant in his heart.
Oh, welcome now the sun's once hated light,
His noonday beams were never half so bright.
Not kindred minds alone are call'd to employ
Their hours, their days, in listening to his joy,
Unconscious nature, all that he surveys,
Rocks, groves, and streams must join him in his praise.
These are thy glorious works[4], eternal Truth,
The scoff of wither'd age and beardless youth;

[4] Paradise Lost, v. 153.

These move the censure and illiberal grin
Of fools that hate thee and delight in sin:
But these shall last when night has quench'd the pole,
And heaven is all departed as a scroll:
And when, as Justice has long since decreed,
This earth shall blaze, and a new world succeed,
Then these thy glorious works, and they that share
That Hope which can alone exclude despair,
Shall live exempt from weakness and decay,
The brightest wonders of an endless day.

Happy the bard, (if that fair name belong
To him that blends no fable with his song,)
Whose lines uniting, by an honest art,
The faithful monitor's and poet's part,
Seek to delight, that they may mend mankind,
And, while they captivate, inform the mind;
Still happier, if he till a thankful soil,
And fruit reward his honourable toil:
But happier far who comfort those that wait
To hear plain truth at Judah's hallow'd gate;
Their language simple, as their manners meek,
No shining ornaments have they to seek,
Nor labour they, nor time nor talents waste,
In sorting flowers to suit a fickle taste;
But while they speak the wisdom of the skies,
Which art can only darken and disguise,
The abundant harvest, recompense divine,
Repays their work,—the gleaning only, mine.

CHARITY.

Quâ nihil majus melinsve terris
Fata donavere bonique divi,
Nec dabunt, quamvis redeant in aurum
Tempora priscum.—Hor. Lib. iv. Ode ii.

Fairest and foremost of the train that wait
On man's most dignified and happiest state,
Whether we name thee Charity or Love,
Chief grace below, and all in all above,
Prosper (I press thee with a powerful plea)
A task I venture on, impell'd by thee:
Oh never seen but in thy bless'd effects,
Nor felt but in the soul that Heaven selects,
Who seeks to praise thee, and to make thee known
To other hearts, must have thee in his own.
Come, prompt me with benevolent desires,
Teach me to kindle at thy gentle fires,
And though disgraced and slighted, to redeem
A poet's name, by making thee the theme.
God working ever on a social plan,
By various ties attaches man to man:
He made at first, though free and unconfined,
One man the common father of the kind,
That every tribe, though placed as he sees best,
Where seas or deserts part them from the rest,
Differing in language, manners, or in face,
Might feel themselves allied to all the race.

When Cook—lamented, and with tears as just
As ever mingled with heroic dust,
Steer'd Britain's oak into a world unknown,
And in his country's glory sought his own,
Wherever he found man, to nature true,
The rights of man were sacred in his view;
He sooth'd with gifts and greeted with a smile
The simple native of the new found isle;
He spurn'd the wretch that slighted or withstood
The tender argument of kindred blood,
Nor would endure that any should control
His freeborn brethren of the southern pole.
But though some nobler minds a law respect,
That none shall with impunity neglect,
In baser souls unnumber'd evils meet,
To thwart its influence and its end defeat.
While Cook is loved for savage lives he saved,
See Cortes odious for a world enslaved!
Where wast thou then, sweet Charity, where then,
Thou tutelary friend of helpless men?
Wast thou in monkish cells and nunneries found,
Or building hospitals on English ground?
No!—Mammon makes the world his legatee
Through fear, not love; and Heaven abhors the fee.
Wherever found, (and all men need thy care,)
Nor age nor infancy could find thee there.
The hand that slew till it could slay no more,
Was glued to the swordhilt with Indian gore.
Their prince, as justly seated on his throne
As vain imperial Philip[1] on his own,

[1] "There is either an obscurity in this passage which it would be well to clear, or a mistake which it would be well to rectify.

Trick'd out of all his royalty by art,
That stripp'd him bare, and broke his honest heart,
Died by the sentence of a shaven priest,
For scorning what they taught him to detest.
How dark the veil that intercepts the blaze
Of Heaven's mysterious purposes and ways;
God stood not, though he seem'd to stand, aloof,
And at this hour the conqueror feels the proof:
The wreath he won drew down an instant curse,
The fretting plague is in the public purse,
The canker'd spoil corrodes the pining state,
Starved by that indolence their mines create.
Oh, could their ancient Incas rise again,
How would they take up Israel's taunting strain!
Art thou too fallen, Iberia! Do we see
The robber and the murderer weak as we?
Thou, that hast wasted earth, and dared despise
Alike the wrath and mercy of the skies,

" Cortes only being mentioned, the reader thinks of the fate of the Mexican Emperor Montezuma. Yet he did not die by sentence, but of an accidental wound, rejecting all efforts to convert him.

" Does Cowper then allude to the atrocities of Pizarro? Or has he confounded the misdoings of both?

" Pizarro, after a sort of mock trial, put to death the Inca Atahualpa. But Philip II. was not then on the throne of Spain, though he might be acting as regent in the absence of his father Charles V.

" Besides, if by '*imperial* Philip,' Cowper meant to designate him as Emperor, he has committed an error; for it was not Philip, but Ferdinand I. who received the imperial crown after the abdication of Charles."

I am obliged to Mr. Tate, Canon Residentiary of St. Paul's, for transmitting to me these remarks by the learned Editor of the last edition of Mitford's History of Greece.

Thy pomp is in the grave, thy glory laid
Low in the pits thine avarice has made.
We come with joy from our eternal rest,
To see the oppressor in his turn oppress'd.
Art thou the God the thunder of whose hand
Roll'd over all our desolated land,
Shook principalities and kingdoms down,
And made the mountains tremble at his frown?
The sword shall light upon thy boasted powers,
And waste them, as thy sword has wasted ours.
'Tis thus Omnipotence his law fulfils,
And vengeance executes what justice wills.

Again—the band of commerce was design'd
To associate all the branches of mankind,
And if a boundless plenty be the robe,
Trade is the golden girdle of the globe.
Wise to promote whatever end he means,
God opens fruitful Nature's various scenes,
Each climate needs what other climes produce,
And offers something to the general use;
No land but listens to the common call,
And in return receives supply from all.
This genial intercourse and mutual aid
Cheers what were else an universal shade,
Calls Nature from her ivy-mantled den,
And softens human rockwork into men.
Ingenious Art with her expressive face,
Steps forth to fashion and refine the race,—
Not only fills Necessity's demand,
But overcharges her capacious hand:
Capricious taste itself can crave no more
Than she supplies from her abounding store:

She strikes out all that luxury can ask,
And gains new vigour at her endless task.
Hers is the spacious arch, the shapely spire,
The painter's pencil, and the poet's lyre;
From her the canvass borrows light and shade,
And verse, more lasting, hues that never fade.
She guides the finger o'er the dancing keys,
Gives difficulty all the grace of ease,
And pours a torrent of sweet notes around,
Fast as the thirsting ear can drink the sound.

These are the gifts of Art, and Art thrives most
Where commerce has enrich'd the busy coast;
He catches all improvements in his flight,
Spreads foreign wonders in his country's sight,
Imports what others have invented well,
And stirs his own to match them or excel.
'Tis thus reciprocating each with each,
Alternately the nations learn and teach;
While Providence enjoins to every soul
An union with the vast terraqueous whole.

Heaven speed the canvass gallantly unfurl'd
To furnish and accommodate a world,
To give the pole the produce of the sun,
And knit the unsocial climates into one!—
Soft airs and gentle heavings of the wave
Impel the fleet whose errand is to save,
To succour wasted regions, and replace
The smile of opulence in sorrow's face!—
Let nothing adverse, nothing unforeseen,
Impede the bark that ploughs the deep serene,
Charged with a freight transcending in its worth
The gems of India, nature's rarest birth,

That flies, like Gabriel on his Lord's commands,
A herald of God's love to pagan lands!—
But, ah! what wish can prosper, or what prayer,
For merchants rich in cargoes of despair,
Who drive a loathsome traffic, gauge and span
And buy the muscles and the bones of man?
The tender ties of father, husband, friend,
All bonds of nature in that moment end,
And each endures, while yet he draws his breath,
A stroke as fatal as the scythe of death.
The sable warrior, frantic with regret
Of her he loves and never can forget,
Loses in tears the far receding shore,
But not the thought that they must meet no more;
Deprived of her and freedom at a blow,
What has he left that he can yet forego?
Yes, to deep sadness sullenly resign'd,
He feels his body's bondage in his mind,
Puts off his generous nature, and, to suit
His manners with his fate, puts on the brute.
  Oh most degrading of all ills that wait
On man, a mourner in his best estate!
All other sorrows virtue may endure,
And find submission more than half a cure;
Grief is itself a medicine, and bestow'd
To improve the fortitude that bears the load,
To teach the wanderer, as his woes increase,
The path of Wisdom, all whose paths are peace.
But slavery!—Virtue dreads it as her grave:
Patience itself is meanness in a slave:
Or if the will and sovereignty of God
Bid suffer it awhile, and kiss the rod,

Wait for the dawning of a brighter day,
And snap the chain the moment when you may.
Nature imprints upon whate'er we see,
That has a heart and life in it, Be free;
The beasts are charter'd,—neither age nor force
Can quell the love of freedom in a horse:
He breaks the cord that held him at the rack,
And, conscious of an unincumber'd back,
Snuffs up the morning air, forgets the rein,
Loose fly his forelock and his ample mane,
Responsive to the distant neigh he neighs,
Nor stops, till, overleaping all delays,
He finds the pasture where his fellows graze.

Canst thou, and honour'd with a Christian name,
Buy what is woman-born, and feel no shame?
Trade in the blood of innocence, and plead
Expedience as a warrant for the deed?
So may the wolf, whom famine has made bold
To quit the forest and invade the fold;
So may the ruffian, who with ghostly glide,
Dagger in hand, steals close to your bedside;
Not he, but his emergence forced the door,
He found it inconvenient to be poor.
Has God then given its sweetness to the cane,
Unless his laws be trampled on,—in vain?
Built a brave world, which cannot yet subsist,
Unless his right to rule it be dismiss'd?
Impudent blasphemy! So Folly pleads,
And, Avarice being judge, with ease succeeds.

But grant the plea, and let it stand for just,
That man make man his prey, because he *must*;
Still there is room for pity to abate,
And sooth the sorrows of so sad a state.

A Briton knows, or if he knows it not,
The Scripture placed within his reach, he ought,
That souls have no discriminating hue,
Alike important in their Maker's view;
That none are free from blemish since the fall,
And love divine has paid one price for all.
The wretch, that works and weeps without relief,
Has one that notices his silent grief.
He, from whose hands alone all power proceeds,
Ranks its abuse among the foulest deeds,
Considers *all* injustice with a frown;
But *marks* the man that treads his fellow down.
Begone! the whip and bell in that hard hand
Are hateful ensigns of usurp'd command;
Not Mexico could purchase kings a claim
To scourge him, weariness his only blame.
Remember, Heaven has an avenging rod;
To smite the poor is treason against God[2].

Trouble is grudgingly and hardly brook'd,
While life's sublimest joys are overlook'd.
We wander o'er a sunburnt thirsty soil,
Murmuring and weary of our daily toil,
Forget to enjoy the palm-tree's offer'd shade,
Or taste the fountain in the neighbouring glade:
Else who would lose, that had the power to improve,
The occasion of transmuting fear to love?
Oh, 'tis a godlike privilege to save,
And he that scorns it is himself a slave.—
Inform his mind; one flash of heavenly day
Would heal his heart, and melt his chains away;

[2] He that oppresseth the poor, reproacheth his Maker.—*Proverbs*, xiv. 31.

"Beauty for ashes" is a gift indeed,
And slaves, by truth enlarged, are doubly freed.
Then would he say, submissive at thy feet,
While gratitude and love made service sweet,
My dear deliverer out of hopeless night,
Whose bounty bought me but to give me light,
I was a bondman on my native plain,
Sin forged, and ignorance made fast the chain;
Thy lips have shed instruction as the dew,
Taught me what path to shun, and what pursue;
Farewell my former joys! I sigh no more
For Africa's once loved, benighted shore,—
Serving a benefactor I am free,
At my best home, if not exiled from thee.

Some men make gain a fountain, whence proceeds
A stream of liberal and heroic deeds;
The swell of pity, not to be confined
Within the scanty limits of the mind,
Disdains the bank, and throws the golden sands,
A rich deposit, on the bordering lands;
These have an ear for *His* paternal call,
Who makes some rich for the supply of all,
God's gift with pleasure in his praise employ,
And THORNTON is familiar with the joy.

Oh, could I worship aught beneath the skies,
That earth hath seen, or fancy can devise,
Thine altar, sacred Liberty, should stand,
Built by no mercenary vulgar hand,
With fragrant turf and flowers as wild and fair
As ever dress'd a bank or scented summer air.
Duly, as ever on the mountain's height
The peep of morning shed a dawning light;

Again, when evening in her sober vest
Drew the grey curtain of the fading west,
My soul should yield thee willing thanks and praise.
For the chief blessings of my fairest days:
But that were sacrilege;—praise is not thine,
But his who gave thee, and preserves thee mine:
Else I would say, and as I spake bid fly
A captive bird into the boundless sky,
This triple realm adores thee;—thou art come
From Sparta hither, and art here at home.
We feel thy force still active, at this hour
Enjoy immunity from priestly power,
While conscience, happier than in ancient years,
Owns no superior but the God she fears.
Propitious spirit! yet expunge a wrong
Thy rights have suffer'd, and our land, too long.
Teach mercy to ten thousand hearts that share
The fears and hopes of a commercial care;
Prisons expect the wicked, and were built
To bind the lawless and to punish guilt,
But shipwreck, earthquake, battle, fire, and flood.
Are mighty mischiefs, not to be withstood,
And honest merit stands on slippery ground,
Where covert guile and artifice abound:
Let just restraint for public peace design'd,
Chain up the wolves and tigers of mankind,
The foe of virtue has no claim to thee,
But let insolvent innocence go free.

Patron, of else the most despised of men,
Accept the tribute of a stranger's pen;
Verse, like the laurel its immortal meed,
Should be the guerdon of a noble deed,

I may alarm thee, but I fear the shame,
(Charity chosen as my theme and aim)
I must incur, forgetting HOWARD's name.
Blest, with all wealth can give thee, to resign
Joys doubly sweet to feelings quick as thine,
To quit the bliss thy rural scenes bestow,
To seek a nobler amidst scenes of woe,
To traverse seas, range kingdoms, and bring home
Not the proud monuments of Greece or Rome,
But knowledge such as only dungeons teach,
And only sympathy like thine could reach;
That grief, sequester'd from the public stage,
Might smooth her feathers and enjoy her cage,
Speaks a divine ambition, and a zeal
The boldest patriot might be proud to feel.
Oh that the voice of clamour and debate,
That pleads for peace till it disturbs the state,
Were hush'd in favour of thy generous plea,
The poor thy clients, and Heaven's smile thy fee!
  Philosophy that does not dream or stray,
Walks arm in arm with Nature all his way,
Compasses earth, dives into it, ascends
Whatever steep enquiry recommends,
Sees planetary wonders smoothly roll
Round other systems under her control,
Drinks wisdom at the milky stream of light
That cheers the silent journey of the night,
And brings at his return a bosom charged
With rich instruction, and a soul enlarged.
The treasured sweets of the capacious plan
That Heaven spreads wide before the view of man,
All prompt his pleased pursuit, and to pursue
Still prompt him, with a pleasure always new;

He too has a connecting power, and draws
Man to the centre of the common cause,
Aiding a dubious and deficient sight
With a new medium and a purer light.
All truth is precious, if not all divine,
And what dilates the powers must needs refine.
He reads the skies, and watching every change,
Provides the faculties an ampler range,
And wins mankind, as his attempts prevail,
A prouder station on the general scale.
But reason still, unless divinely taught,
Whate'er she learns, learns nothing as she ought;
The lamp of revelation only, shows,
What human wisdom cannot but oppose,
That man in nature's richest mantle clad,
And graced with all philosophy can add,
Though fair without, and luminous within,
Is still the progeny and heir of sin.
Thus taught, down falls the plumage of his pride,
He feels his need of an unerring guide,
And knows that falling he shall rise no more,
Unless the power that bade him stand, restore.
This is indeed philosophy; this known,
Makes wisdom, worthy of the name, his own;
And without this, whatever he discuss,
Whether the space between the stars and us,
Whether he measure earth, compute the sea,
Weigh sunbeams, carve a fly, or spit a flea,
The solemn trifler with his boasted skill
Toils much, and is a solemn trifler still;
Blind was he born, and his misguided eyes
Grown dim in trifling studies, blind he dies.

Self-knowledge truly learn'd, of course implies
The rich possession of a nobler prize,
For self to self, and God to man reveal'd,
(Two themes to nature's eye for ever seal'd.)
Are taught by rays that fly with equal pace
From the same centre of enlightening grace.
Here stay thy foot; how copious and how clear
The o'erflowing well of Charity springs here!
Hark! 'tis the music of a thousand rills,
Some through the groves, some down the sloping hills,
Winding a secret or an open course,
And all supplied from an eternal source.
The ties of Nature do but feebly bind,
And commerce partially reclaims mankind;
Philosophy, without his heavenly guide,
May blow up self-conceit, and nourish pride,
But while his province is the reasoning part,
Has still a veil of midnight on his heart:
'Tis truth divine exhibited on earth.
Gives Charity her being and her birth.
Suppose (when thought is warm and fancy flows,
What will not argument sometimes suppose?)
An isle possess'd by creatures of our kind,
Endued with reason, yet by nature blind.
Let supposition lend her aid once more,
And land some grave optician on the shore:
He claps his lens, if haply they may see,
Close to the part where vision ought to be;
But finds that though his tubes assist the sight,
They cannot give it, or make darkness light.
He reads wise lectures, and describes aloud
A sense they know not, to the wondering crowd,

He talks of light, and the prismatic hues,
As men of depth in erudition use,
But all he gains for his harangue is—Well—
What monstrous lies some travellers will tell!

The soul whose sight all-quickening grace renews
Takes the resemblance of the good she views,
As diamonds stript of their opaque disguise,
Reflect the noonday glory of the skies.
She speaks of Him, her author, guardian, friend,
Whose love knew no beginning, knows no end,
In language warm as all that love inspires,
And in the glow of her intense desires
Pants to communicate her noble fires.
She sees a world stark blind to what employs
Her eager thought and feeds her flowing joys,
Though wisdom hail them, heedless of her call,
Flies to save some, and feels a pang for all:
Herself as weak as her support is strong,
She feels that frailty she denied so long,
And from a knowledge of her own disease,
Learns to compassionate the sick she sees.
Here see, acquitted of all vain pretence,
The reign of genuine Charity commence;
Though scorn repay her sympathetic tears,
She still is kind, and still she perseveres;
The truth she loves, a sightless world blaspheme,
'Tis childish dotage, a delirious dream,
The danger they discern not, they deny,
Laugh at their only remedy, and die.
But still a soul thus touch'd can never cease,
Whoever threatens war, to speak of peace.
Pure in her aim and in her temper mild,
Her wisdom seems the weakness of a child;

She makes excuses where she might condemn,
Reviled by those that hate her, prays for them;
Suspicion lurks not in her artless breast,
The worst suggested, she believes the best;
Not soon provoked, however stung and teased,
And if perhaps made angry, soon appeased;
She rather waives than will dispute her right,
And injured, makes forgiveness her delight.
Such was the portrait an apostle drew,
The bright original was one he knew,
Heaven held his hand, the likeness must be true.

When one that holds communion with the skies
Has fill'd his urn where these pure waters rise,
And once more mingles with us meaner things,
'Tis even as if an Angel shook his wings:
Immortal fragrance fills the circuit wide[3],
That tells us whence his treasures are supplied.
So when a ship, well freighted with the stores
The sun matures on India's spicey shores,
Has dropt her anchor and her canvass furl'd,
In some safe haven of our western world,
'Twere vain enquiry to what port she went,
The gale informs us, laden with the scent[4].

Some seek, when queasy conscience has its qualms,
To lull the painful malady with alms:

[3] Like Maia's son he stood
And shook his plumes, that heavenly fragrance fill'd
The circuit wide. *Paradise Lost*, v. 205.

[4] . . . . . gentle gales
Fanning their odoriferous wings dispense
Native perfumes, and whisper whence they stole
Those balmy spoils. *Paradise Lost*, iv. 156.

But charity not feign'd intends alone
Another's good,—theirs centres in their own;
And too short-lived to reach the realms of peace,
Must cease for ever when the poor shall cease.
Flavia, most tender of her own good name,
Is rather careless of a sister's fame:
Her superfluity the poor supplies,
But if she touch a character, it dies.
The seeming virtue weigh'd against the vice,
She deems all safe, for she has paid the price;
No charity but alms aught values she,
Except in porcelain on her mantle-tree.
How many deeds with which the world has rung,
From pride in league with ignorance have sprung!
But God o'errules all human follies still,
And bends the tough materials to his will.
A conflagration or a wintry flood
Has left some hundreds without home or food,
Extravagance and avarice shall subscribe,
While fame and self-complacence are the bribe.
The brief proclaim'd, it visits every pew,
But first the 'Squire's, a compliment but due;
With slow deliberation he unties
His glittering purse, that envy of all eyes,
And while the clerk just puzzles out the psalm,
Slides guinea behind guinea in his palm;
Till finding, what he might have found before,
A smaller piece amidst the precious store,
Pinch'd close between his finger and his thumb,
He half exhibits, and then drops the sum.
Gold to be sure!—Throughout the town 'tis told,
How the good 'Squire gives never less than gold.

From motives such as his, though not the best,
Springs in due time supply for the distress'd,
Not less effectual than what love bestows,
Except—that office clips it as it goes.
But lest I seem to sin against a friend,
And wound the grace I mean to recommend,
(Though vice derided with a just design
Implies no trespass against love divine,)
Once more I would adopt the graver style;
A teacher should be sparing of his smile.
Unless a love of virtue light the flame,
Satire is, more than those he brands, to blame;
He hides behind a magisterial air
His own offences, and strips others bare,
Affects indeed a most humane concern,
That men, if gently tutor'd, will not learn,
That mulish folly, not be reclaim'd
By softer methods, must be made ashamed,—
But (I might instance in St. Patrick's dean)
Too often rails to gratify his spleen.
Most satirists are indeed a public scourge;
Their mildest physic is a farrier's purge;
Their acrid temper turns, as soon as stirr'd,
The milk of their good purpose all to curd.
Their zeal begotten, as their works rehearse,
By lean despair upon an empty purse,
The wild assassins start into the street,
Prepared to poignard whomsoe'er they meet.
No skill in swordsmanship however just,
Can be secure against a madman's thrust;
And even virtue, so unfairly match'd,
Although immortal, may be prick'd or scratch'd.

When scandal has new-minted an old lie,
Or tax'd invention for a fresh supply,
'Tis call'd a satire, and the world appears
Gathering around it with erected ears;
A thousand names are toss'd into the crowd,
Some whisper'd softly, and some twang'd aloud,
Just as the sapience of an author's brain
Suggests it safe or dangerous to be plain.
Strange! how the frequent interjected dash
Quickens a market and helps off the trash;
The important letters that include the rest
Serve as a key to those that are suppress'd;
Conjecture gripes the victims in his paw,
The world is charm'd, and Scrib escapes the law.
So when the cold damp shades of night prevail,
Worms may be caught by either head or tail;
Forcibly drawn from many a close recess,
They meet with little pity, no redress;
Plunged in the stream they lodge upon the mud,
Food for the famish'd rovers of the flood.

All zeal for a reform that gives offence
To peace and charity, is mere pretence;
A bold remark, but which, if well applied,
Would humble many a towering poet's pride.
Perhaps the man was in a sportive fit,
And had no other play-place for his wit;
Perhaps, enchanted with the love of fame,
He sought the jewel in his neighbour's shame;
Perhaps—whatever end he might pursue,
The cause of virtue could not be his view.
At every stroke wit flashes in our eyes,
The turns are quick, the polish'd points surprise,

But shine with cruel and tremendous charms,
That while they please, possess us with alarms:
So have I seen, (and hasten'd to the sight
On all the wings of holiday delight,)
Where stands that monument of ancient power,
Named with emphatic dignity, the Tower,
Guns, halberts, swords, and pistols, great and small,
In starry forms disposed upon the wall;
We wonder, as we gazing stand below,
That brass and steel should make so fine a show;
But though we praise the exact designer's skill,
Account them implements of mischief still.

No works shall find acceptance in that day
When all disguises shall be rent away,
That square not truly with the Scripture plan,
Nor spring from love to God, or love to man.
As he ordains things sordid in their birth,
To be resolved into their parent earth,
And though the soul shall seek superior orbs,
Whate'er this world produces, it absorbs;
So self starts nothing but what tends apace,
Home to the goal where it began the race.
Such as our motive is our aim must be,
If this be servile, that can ne'er be free;
If self employ us, whatsoe'er is wrought,
We glorify that self, not Him we ought:
Such virtues had need prove their own reward,
The judge of all men owes them no regard.
True Charity, a plant divinely nursed,
Fed by the love from which it rose at first,
Thrives against hope, and in the rudest scene
Storms but enliven its unfading green;

Exuberant is the shadow it supplies,
Its fruit on earth, its growth above the skies.
To look at Him who form'd us and redeem'd,
So glorious now, though once so disesteem'd,
To see a God stretch forth his human hand,
To uphold the boundless scenes of his command,—
To recollect that in a form like ours
He bruised beneath his feet the infernal powers,
Captivity led captive, rose to claim
The wreath he won so dearly in our name;
That throned above all height [5] he condescends
To call the few that trust in him his friends;
That in the heaven of heavens, that space he deems
Too scanty for the exertion of his beams,
And shines, as if impatient to bestow
Life and a kingdom upon worms below;
That sight imparts a never dying flame,
Though feeble in degree, in kind the same.
Like Him the soul thus kindled from above
Spreads wide her arms of universal love,
And still enlarged as she receives the grace,
Includes creation in her close embrace.
Behold a Christian!—and without the fires
The founder of that name alone inspires,
Though all accomplishments, all knowledge meet,
To make the shining prodigy complete,
Whoever boasts that name—behold a cheat!

Were love, in these the world's last doting years,
As frequent, as the want of it appears,
The churches warm'd, they would no longer hold
Such frozen figures, stiff as they are cold;

[5] Paradise Lost, iii. 58.

Relenting forms would lose their power or cease,
And e'en the dipp'd and sprinkled, live in peace:
Each heart would quit its prison in the breast,
And flow in free communion with the rest.
The statesman skill'd in projects dark and deep,
Might burn his useless Machiavel, and sleep;
His budget often fill'd, yet always poor,
Might swing at ease behind his study door,
No longer prey upon our annual rents,
Nor scare the nation with its big contents:
Disbanded legions freely might depart,
And slaying man would cease to be an art.
No learned disputants would take the field,
Sure not to conquer, and sure not to yield;
Both sides deceived, if rightly understood,
Pelting each other for the public good.
Did Charity prevail, the press would prove
A vehicle of virtue, truth, and love;
And I might spare myself the pains to show
What few can learn, and all suppose they know.

Thus have I sought to grace a serious lay
With many a wild indeed but flowery spray,
In hopes to gain, what else I must have lost,
The attention pleasure has so much engross'd.
But if unhappily deceived I dream,
And prove too weak for so divine a theme,
Let Charity forgive me a mistake
That zeal, not vanity, has chanced to make,
And spare the poet for his subject sake.

CONVERSATION.

Nam neque me tantum venientis sibilus austri,
Nec percussa juvant fluctû tam litora, nec quæ
Saxosas inter decurrunt flumina valles.

VIRG. Ecl. 5.

THOUGH Nature weigh our talents, and dispense
To every man his modicum of sense,
And Conversation in its better part
May be esteemed a gift and not an art,
Yet much depends, as in the tiller's toil,
On culture, and the sowing of the soil.
Words learn'd by rote a parrot may rehearse,
But talking is not always to converse,
Not more distinct from harmony divine
The constant creaking of a country sign.
As alphabets in ivory employ
Hour after hour the yet unletter'd boy,
Sorting and puzzling with a deal of glee
Those seeds of science called his A B C,
So language in the mouths of the adult,
Witness its insignificant result,
Too often proves an implement of play,
A toy to sport with, and pass time away.
Collect at evening what the day brought forth,
Compress the sum into its solid worth,
And if it weigh the importance of a fly,
The scales are false, or algebra a lie.

Sacred interpreter of human thought,
How few respect or use thee as they ought!
But all shall give account of every wrong
Who dare dishonour or defile the tongue,
Who prostitute it in the cause of vice,
Or sell their glory at a market-price,
Who vote for hire, or point it with lampoon,
The dear-bought placeman, and the cheap buffoon.
There is a prurience in the speech of some,
Wrath stays him, or else God would strike them dumb:
His wise forbearance has their end in view,
They fill their measure and receive their due.
The heathen law-givers of ancient days,
Names almost worthy of a Christian praise,
Would drive them forth from the resort of men,
And shut up every satyr in his den.
Oh come not ye near innocence and truth,
Ye worms that eat into the bud of youth!
Infectious as impure, your blighting power
Taints in its rudiments the promised flower,
Its odour perish'd and its charming hue;
Thenceforth 'tis hateful, for it smells of you.
Not even the vigorous and headlong rage
Of adolescence or a firmer age,
Affords a plea allowable or just,
For making speech the pamperer of lust;
But when the breath of age commits the fault,
'Tis nauseous as the vapour of a vault.
So wither'd stumps disgrace the sylvan scene,
No longer fruitful and no longer green,
The sapless wood divested of the bark
Grows fungous, and takes fire at every spark.

Oaths terminate, as Paul observes, all strife;
Some men have surely then a peaceful life.
Whatever subject occupy discourse,
The feats of Vestris or the naval force,
Asseveration blustering in your face
Makes contradiction such an hopeless case;
In every tale they tell, or false or true,
Well known, or such as no man ever knew,
They fix attention, heedless of your pain,
With oaths like rivets forced into the brain;
And even when sober truth prevails throughout,
They swear it, 'till affirmance breeds a doubt.
A Persian, humble servant of the Sun,
Who, though devout, yet bigotry had none,
Hearing a lawyer, grave in his address,
With adjurations every word impress,
Supposed the man a Bishop, or at least,
God's name so much upon his lips, a priest,
Bow'd at the close with all his graceful airs,
And begg'd an interest in his frequent prayers.

Go quit the rank to which ye stood preferr'd,
Henceforth associate in one common herd;
Religion, virtue, reason, common sense,
Pronounce your human form a false pretence,—
A mere disguise in which a devil lurks,
Who yet betrays his secret by his works.

Ye powers who rule the tongue, if such there are,
And make colloquial happiness your care,
Preserve me from the thing I dread and hate,—
A duel in the form of a debate:
The clash of arguments and jar of words,
Worse than the mortal brunt of rival swords,

Decide no question with their tedious length,
For opposition gives opinion strength,
Divert the champions prodigal of breath,
And put the peaceably-disposed to death.
Oh thwart me not, Sir Soph. at every turn,
Nor carp at every flaw you may discern;
Though syllogisms hang not on my tongue,
I am not surely always in the wrong:
'Tis hard if all is false that I advance,
A fool must now and then be right by chance.
Not that all freedom of dissent I blame;
No,—there I grant the privilege I claim.
A disputable point is no man's ground,
Rove where you please, 'tis common all around;
Discourse may want an animated No,
To brush the surface, and to make it flow;
But still remember, if you mean to please,
To press your point with modesty and ease.
The mark at which my juster aim I take,
Is contradiction for its own dear sake:
Set your opinion at whatever pitch,
Knots and impediments make something hitch;
Adopt his own, 'tis equally in vain,
Your thread of argument is snapt again;
The wrangler, rather than accord with you,
Will judge himself deceived,—and prove it too.
Vociferated logic kills me quite,—
A noisy man is always in the right;
I twirl my thumbs, fall back into my chair,
Fix on the wainscot a distressful stare,
And when I hope his blunders are all out,
Reply discreetly—To be sure—no doubt.

Dubius is such a scrupulous good man,—
Yes, you may catch him tripping if you can.
He would not with a peremptory tone
Assert the nose upon his face his own;
With hesitation admirably slow,
He humbly hopes, presumes it may be so.
His evidence, if he were called by law
To swear to some enormity he saw,
For want of prominence and just relief,
Would hang an honest man, and save a thief.
Through constant dread of giving truth offence,
He ties up all his hearers in suspense,
Knows what he knows as if he knew it not,
What he remembers seems to have forgot,
His sole opinion, whatsoe'er befall,
Centering at last in having none at all.
Yet though he tease and baulk your listening ear,
He makes one useful point exceeding clear;
Howe'er ingenious on his darling theme
A sceptic in philosophy may seem,
Reduced to practice, his beloved rule
Would only prove him a consummate fool.
Useless in him alike both brain and speech,
Fate having placed all truth above his reach;
His ambiguities his total sum,
He might as well be blind and deaf and dumb.

Where men of judgement creep and feel their way,
The positive pronounce without dismay,
Their want of light and intellect supplied
By sparks absurdity strikes out of pride:
Without the means of knowing right from wrong,
They always are decisive, clear, and strong;

Where others toil with philosophic force,
Their nimble nonsense takes a shorter course,
Flings at your head conviction in the lump,
And gains remote conclusions at a jump:
Their own defect, invisible to them,
Seen in another they at once condemn,
And though self-idolized in every case,
Hate their own likeness in a brother's face.
The cause is plain and not to be denied,
The proud are always most provoked by pride;
Few competitions but engender spite,
And those the most where neither has a right.
The point of honour has been deem'd of use,
To teach good manners and to curb abuse;
Admit it true, the consequence is clear,
Our polish'd manners are a mask we wear,
And at the bottom, barbarous still and rude,
We are restrain'd indeed, but not subdued.
The very remedy, however sure,
Springs from the mischief it intends to cure,
And savage in its principle appears,
Tried, as it should be, by the fruit it bears.
'Tis hard indeed if nothing will defend
Mankind from quarrels but their fatal end,
That now and then a hero must decease,
That the surviving world may live in peace.
Perhaps at last close scrutiny may show
The practice dastardly and mean and low,
That men engage in it compell'd by force,
And fear, not courage, is its proper source,
The fear of tyrant custom, and the fear
Lest fops should censure us, and fools should sneer.

At least to trample on our Maker's laws,
And hazard life for any or no cause,
To rush into a fixt eternal state
Out of the very flames of rage and hate,
Or send another shivering to the bar
With all the guilt of such unnatural war,
Whatever use may urge, or honour plead,
On reason's verdict is a madman's deed.
Am I to set my life upon a throw
Because a bear is rude and surly? No.—
A moral, sensible, and well-bred man
Will not affront me, and no other can.
Were I empower'd to regulate the lists,
They should encounter with well-loaded fists;
A Trojan combat would be something new,
Let Dares beat Entellus black and blue,
Then each might show to his admiring friends
In honourable bumps his rich amends,
And carry in contusions of his scull
A satisfactory receipt in full.

A story in which native humour reigns
Is often useful, always entertains;
A graver fact enlisted on your side
May furnish illustration, well applied;
But sedentary weavers of long tales
Give me the fidgets, and my patience fails.
'Tis the most asinine employ on earth,
To hear them tell of parentage and birth,
And echo conversations dull and dry,
Embellish'd with, *he said*, and *so said I*.
At every interview their route the same,
The repetition makes attention lame;

We bustle up with unsuccessful speed,
And in the saddest part cry,—droll indeed!
The path of narrative with care pursue,
Still making probability your clue,
On all the vestiges of truth attend,
And let *them* guide you to a decent end.
Of all ambitions man may entertain,
The worst that can invade a sickly brain
Is that which angles hourly for surprise,
And baits its hook with prodigies and lies.
Credulous infancy or age as weak
Are fittest auditors for such to seek,
Who to please others will themselves disgrace,
Yet please not, but affront you to your face.
A great retailer of this curious ware,
Having unloaded, and made many stare,
Can this be true? an arch observer cries,—
Yes, rather moved, I saw it with these eyes.
Sir! I believe it on that ground alone;
I could not had I seen it with my own.
A tale should be judicious, clear, succinct,
The language plain, and incidents well link'd.
Tell not as new what every body knows,
And new or old still hasten to a close,
There centering in a focus, round and neat,
Let all your rays of information meet:
What neither yields us profit or delight,
Is like a nurse's lullaby at night;
Guy Earl of Warwick and fair Eleanore,
Or giant-killing Jack would please me more.
The pipe with solemn interposing puff
Makes half a sentence at a time enough;

The dozing sages drop the drowsy strain,
Then pause, and puff,—and speak, and pause again.
Such often like the tube they so admire,
Important triflers! have more smoke than fire.
Pernicious weed! whose scent the fair annoys,
Unfriendly to society's chief joys,
Thy worst effect is banishing for hours
The sex whose presence civilizes ours.
Thou art indeed the drug a gardener wants
To poison vermin that infest his plants;
But are we so to wit and beauty blind
As to despise the glory of our kind,
And show the softest minds and fairest forms
As little mercy as he grubs and worms?
They dare not wait the riotous abuse
Thy thirst-creating steams at length produce,
When wine has given indecent language birth,
And forced the flood-gates of licentious mirth;
For sea-born Venus her attachment shows
Still to that element from which she rose,
And with a quiet which no fumes disturb,
Sips meek infusions of a milder herb.

The emphatic speaker dearly loves to oppose
In contact inconvenient, nose to nose,
As if the gnomon on his neighbour's phiz,
Touch'd with a magnet had attracted his.
His whisper'd theme, dilated and at large,
Proves after all a wind-gun's airy charge,—
An extract of his diary,—no more,—
A tasteless journal of the day before.
He walk'd abroad, o'ertaken in the rain,
Call'd on a friend, drank tea, stept home again;

Resumed his purpose, had a world of talk
With one he stumbled on, and lost his walk.
I interrupt him with a sudden bow,
Adieu, dear Sir! lest you should lose it now.
I cannot talk with civet in the room,
A fine puss-gentleman that's all perfume;
The sight 's enough,—no need to smell a beau,—
Who thrusts his nose into a raree-show?
His odoriferous attempts to please
Perhaps might prosper with a swarm of bees,
But we that make no honey though we sting,
Poets, are sometimes apt to maul the thing.
'Tis wrong to bring into a mix'd resort,
What makes some sick, and others *à-la-mort*,
An argument of cogence, we may say,
Why such a one should keep *himself* away.
A graver coxcomb we may sometimes see
Quite as absurd, though not so light as he:
A shallow brain behind a serious mask,
An oracle within an empty cask,
The solemn fop; significant and budge;
A fool with judges, amongst fools a judge;
He says but little, and that little said
Owes all its weight, like loaded dice, to lead.
His wit invites you by his looks to come,
But when you knock it never is at home:
'Tis like a parcel sent you by the stage,
Some handsome present, as your hopes presage,
'Tis heavy, bulky, and bids fair to prove
An absent friend's fidelity and love;
But when unpack'd your disappointment groans
To find it stuff'd with brickbats, earth, and stones.

Some men employ their health, an ugly trick,
In making known how oft they have been sick,
And give us in recitals of disease
A doctor's trouble, but without the fees:
Relate how many weeks they kept their bed,
How an emetic or cathartic sped;
Nothing is slightly touch'd, much less forgot,
Nose, ears, and eyes, seem present on the spot.
Now the distemper, spite of draught or pill,
Victorious seem'd, and now the doctor's skill;
And now—alas for unforeseen mishaps!
They put on a damp nightcap and relapse;
They thought they must have died, they were so bad;
Their peevish hearers almost wish they had.

Some fretful tempers wince at every touch,
You always do too little or too much:
You speak with life in hopes to entertain,
Your elevated voice goes through the brain;
You fall at once into a lower key,
That's worse,—the dronepipe of an humble-bee.
The southern sash admits too strong a light,
You rise and drop the curtain,—now 'tis night.
He shakes with cold,—you stir the fire and strive
To make a blaze,—that's roasting him alive.
Serve him with venison, and he chooses fish;
With sole,—that's just the sort he would not wish.
He takes what he at first profess'd to loathe,
And in due time feeds heartily on both;
Yet still, o'erclouded with a constant frown,
He does not swallow, but he gulps it down.
Your hope to please him vain on every plan,
Himself should work that wonder, if he can.—

Alas! his efforts double his distress,
He likes yours little, and his own still less;
Thus always teasing others, always teased,
His only pleasure is—to be displeased.
I pity bashful men, who feel the pain
Of fancied scorn and undeserved disdain,
And bear the marks upon a blushing face
Of needless shame and self-imposed disgrace.
Our sensibilities are so acute,
The fear of being silent[1] makes us mute.
We sometimes think we could a speech produce
Much to the purpose, if our tongues were loose,
But, being tied, it dies upon the lip,
Faint as a chicken's note that has the pip:
Our wasted oil unprofitably burns,
Like hidden lamps in old sepulchral[2] urns.
Few Frenchmen of this evil have complain'd;
It seems as if we Britons were ordain'd,
By way of wholesome curb upon our pride,
To fear each other, fearing none beside.
The cause perhaps inquiry may descry,
Self-searching with an introverted eye,

[1] *Il n'est jamais plus difficile de bien parler que quand on a honte de se taire.*—Rochefoucauld.

[2] Love in your heart as idly burns
As fire in antique Roman urns.
Hudibras, ii. 1309.

Dim lights of life, that burn a length of years
Useless, unseen, as lamps in sepulchres.
Pope, Elegy on an unfortunate Lady.

Ah! hopeless, lasting flames, like those that burn
To light the dead, and warm the unfruitful urn.
Pope, Eloisa to Abelard.

Conceal'd within an unsuspected part,
The vainest corner of our own vain heart:
For ever aiming at the world's esteem,
Our self-importance ruins its own scheme;
In other eyes our talents rarely shown,
Become at length so splendid in our own,
We dare not risk them into public view,
Lest they miscarry of what seems their due.
True modesty is a discerning grace,
And only blushes in the proper place;
But counterfeit is blind, and skulks through fear,
Where 'tis a shame to be ashamed to appear:
Humility the parent of the first,
The last by Vanity produced and nursed.
The circle form'd, we sit in silent state,
Like figures drawn upon a dial-plate;
Yes, Ma'am, and no, Ma'am, utter'd softly, show
Every five minutes how the minutes go;
Each individual suffering a constraint,
Poetry may, but colours cannot paint,
As if in close committee on the sky,
Reports it hot or cold, or wet or dry,
And finds a changing clime a happy source
Of wise reflection and well timed discourse.
We next inquire, but softly and by stealth,
Like conservators of the public health,
Of epidemic throats, if such there are,
And coughs and rheums, and phthisic and catarrh.
That theme exhausted, a wide chasm ensues,
Fill'd up at last with interesting news,
Who danced with whom, and who are like to wed,
And who is hang'd, and who is brought to bed;

But fear to call a more important cause,
As if 'twere treason against English laws.
The visit paid, with ecstasy we come,
As from a seven years' transportation, home,
And there resume an unembarrass'd brow,
Recovering what we lost we know not how,
The faculties that seem'd reduced to nought,
Expression and the privilege of thought.

The reeking, roaring hero of the chase,
I give him over as a desperate case.
Physicians write in hopes to work a cure,
Never, if honest ones, when death is sure;
And though the fox he follows may be tamed,
A mere fox-follower never is reclaim'd.
Some farrier should prescribe his proper course,
Whose only fit companion is his horse,
Or if deserving of a better doom,
The noble beast judge otherwise, his groom.
Yet even the rogue that serves him, though he stand
To take his honour's orders cap in hand,
Prefers his fellow grooms, with much good sense,
Their skill a truth, his master's a pretence.
If neither horse nor groom affect the squire,
Where can at last his jockeyship retire?
Oh, to the club, the scene of savage joys,
The school of coarse good fellowship and noise;
There, in the sweet society of those
Whose friendship from his boyish years he chose,
Let him improve his talent if he can,
Till none but beasts acknowledge him a man.

Man's heart had been impenetrably seal'd
Like theirs that cleave the flood or graze the field,

Had not his Maker's all-bestowing hand
Given him a soul, and bade him understand.
The reasoning power vouchsafed of course inferr'd
The power to clothe that reason with his word;
For all is perfect that God works on earth,
And He that gives conception adds the birth.
If this be plain, 'tis plainly understood
What uses of his boon the giver would.
The mind despatch'd upon her busy toil,
Should range where Providence has bless'd the soil;
Visiting every flower with labour meet,
And gathering all her treasures sweet by sweet,
She should imbue the tongue with what she sips,
And shed the balmy blessing on the lips,
That good diffused may more abundant grow,
And speech may praise the power that bids it flow.
Will the sweet warbler of the livelong night
That fills the listening lover with delight,
Forget his harmony, with rapture heard,
To learn the twittering of a meaner bird?
Or make the parrot's mimicry his choice,
That odious libel on a human voice?
No,—Nature, unsophisticate by man,
Starts not aside from her Creator's plan;
The melody that was at first design'd
To cheer the rude[3] forefathers of mankind,
Is note for note deliver'd in our ears,
In the last scene of her six thousand years:
Yet Fashion, leader of a chattering train,
Whom man for his own hurt permits to reign,

[3] Gray.

Who shifts and changes all things but his shape,
And would degrade her votary to an ape,
The fruitful parent of abuse and wrong
Holds a usurp'd dominion o'er his tongue;
There sits and prompts him with his own disgrace,
Prescribes the theme, the tone, and the grimace,
And when accomplish'd in her wayward school,
Calls gentleman whom she has made[4] a fool.
'Tis an unalterable fix'd decree,
That none could frame or ratify but she,
That heaven and hell, and righteousness and sin,
Snares in his path, and foes that lurk within,
God and his attributes, (a field of day
Where 'tis an angel's happiness to stray,)
Fruits of his love, and wonders of his might,
Be never named in ears esteem'd polite:
That he who dares, when she forbids, be grave,
Shall stand proscribed a madman or a knave,
A close designer not to be believed,
Or, if excused that charge, at least deceived.
Oh folly worthy of the nurse's lap,
Give it the breast, or stop its mouth with pap!
Is it incredible, or can it seem
A dream to any, except those that dream,
That man should love his Maker, and *that* fire,
Warming his heart, should at his lips transpire?
Know then, and modestly let fall your eyes,
And veil your daring crest that braves the skies,
That air of insolence affronts your God,
You need his pardon, and provoke his rod:

[4] And into coxcombs burnishes our fools.
Young, satire vii.

Now, in a posture that becomes you more
Than that heroic strut assumed before,
Know, your arrears with every hour accrue
For mercy shown, while wrath is justly due.
The time is short, and there are souls on earth,
Though future pain may serve for present mirth,
Acquainted with the woes that fear or shame,
By fashion taught, forbade them once to name,
And having felt the pangs you deem a jest,
Have proved them truths too big to be express'd.
Go seek on Revelation's hallow'd ground,
Sure to succeed, the remedy they found:
Touch'd by that power that you have dared to mock,
That makes seas stable, and dissolves the rock,
Your heart shall yield a life-renewing stream,
That fools, as you have done, shall call a dream.

It happen'd on a solemn eventide,
Soon after He that was our surety died,
Two bosom friends, each pensively inclined,
The scene of all those sorrows left behind,
Sought their own village, busied as they went
In musings worthy of the great event:
They spake of him they loved, of him whose life,
Though blameless, had incurr'd perpetual strife,
Whose deeds had left, in spite of hostile arts,
A deep memorial graven on their hearts.
The recollection, like a vein of ore,
The farther traced enrich'd them still the more;
They thought him, and they justly thought him, one
Sent to do more than he appear'd to have done,
To exalt a people, and to place them high
Above all else, and wonder'd he should die.

Ere yet they brought their journey to an end,
A stranger join'd them, courteous as a friend,
And ask'd them with a kind engaging air
What their affliction was, and begg'd a share.
Inform'd, he gather'd up the broken thread,
And truth and wisdom gracing all he said,
Explain'd, illustrated, and search'd so well
The tender theme on which they chose to dwell,
That reaching home, the night, they said, is near,
We must not now be parted, sojourn here.—
The new acquaintance soon became a guest,
And made so welcome at their simple feast,
He bless'd the bread, but vanish'd at the word,
And left them both exclaiming, 'Twas the Lord!
Did not our hearts feel all he deign'd to say,
Did they not burn within us by the way?

Now theirs was converse such as it behoves
Man to maintain, and such as God approves:
Their views indeed were indistinct and dim,
But yet successful, being aim'd at him.
Christ and his character their only scope,
Their object and their subject and their hope,
They felt what it became them much to feel,
And, wanting him to loose the sacred seal,
Found him as prompt as their desire was true,
To spread the newborn glories in their view.

Well,—what are ages and the lapse of time
Match'd against truths as lasting as sublime?
Can length of years on God himself exact,
Or make that fiction which was once a fact?
No,—marble and recording brass decay,
And like the graver's memory pass away;

The works of man inherit, as is just,
Their author's frailty, and return to dust;
But truth divine for ever stands secure,
Its head as guarded as its base is sure;
Fix'd in the rolling flood of endless years
The pillar of the eternal plan appears,
The raving storm and dashing wave defies,
Built by that Architect who built the skies.
Hearts may be found that harbour at this hour
That love of Christ in all its quickening power,
And lips unstain'd by folly or by strife,
Whose wisdom, drawn from the deep well of life,
Tastes of its healthful origin, and flows
A Jordan for the ablution of our woes.
Oh days of heaven and nights of equal praise,
Serene and peaceful as those heavenly days,
When souls drawn upward in communion sweet,
Enjoy the stillness of some close retreat,
Discourse as if released and safe at home,
Of dangers past and wonders yet to come,
And spread the sacred treasures of the breast
Upon the lap of covenanted rest.

What, always dreaming over heavenly things,
Like angel-heads in stone with pigeon-wings?
Canting and whining out all day the word,
And half the night? fanatic and absurd!
Mine be the friend less frequent in his prayers,
Who makes no bustle with his soul's affairs,
Whose wit can brighten up a wintry day,
And chase the splenetic dull hours away,
Content on earth in earthly things to shine,
Who waits for heaven ere he becomes divine,

Leaves saints to enjoy those altitudes they teach,
And plucks the fruit placed more within his reach.
Well spoken. Advocate of sin and shame,
Known by thy bleating, Ignorance thy name.
Is sparkling wit the world's exclusive right,
The fix'd fee simple of the vain and light?
Can hopes of heaven, bright prospects of an hour
That comes to waft us out of sorrow's power,
Obscure or quench a faculty that finds
Its happiest soil in the serenest minds?
Religion curbs indeed its wanton play,
And brings the trifler under rigorous sway,
But gives it usefulness unknown before,
And purifying, makes it shine the more.
A Christian's wit is inoffensive light,
A beam that aids but never grieves the sight,
Vigorous in age as in the flush of youth,
'Tis always active on the side of truth;
Temperance and peace insure its healthful state,
And make it brightest at its latest date.
Oh I have seen (nor hope perhaps in vain,
Ere life go down, to see such sights again,)
A veteran warrior in the Christian field,
Who never saw the sword he could not wield;
Grave without dulness, learned without pride.
Exact yet not precise, though meek keen-eyed;
A man that would have foil'd at their own play
A dozen would-be's of the modern day;
Who when occasion justified its use,
Had wit as bright as ready to produce,
Could fetch from records of an earlier age,
Or from philosophy's enlighten'd page,

His rich materials, and regale your ear
With strains it was a privilege to hear;
Yet above all his luxury supreme,
And his chief glory, was the gospel theme;
There he was copious as old Greece or Rome,
His happy eloquence seem'd there at home,
Ambitious not to shine or to excel,
But to treat justly what he loved so well.

It moves me more perhaps than folly ought,
When some green heads as void of wit as thought,
Suppose *themselves* monopolists of sense,
And wiser men's ability pretence.
Though time will wear us, and we must grow old,
Such men are not forgot as soon as cold,
Their fragrant memory will outlast their tomb,
Embalm'd for ever in its own perfume.
And to say truth, though in its early prime,
And when unstain'd with any grosser crime,
Youth has a sprightliness and fire to boast,
That in the valley of decline are lost,
And Virtue with peculiar charms appears
Crown'd with the garland[5] of life's blooming years;
Yet age, by long experience well inform'd,
Well read, well temper'd, with religion warm'd,
That fire abated which impels rash youth,
Proud of his speed, to overshoot the truth,
As time improves the grape's authentic juice,
Mellows and makes the speech more fit for use,
And claims a reverence in its shortening day,
That 'tis an honour and a joy to pay.

[5] *Gratior et pulchro veniens in corpore virtus.*
Virgil.

The fruits of age, less fair, are yet more sound
Than those a brighter season pours around,
And like the stores autumnal suns mature,
Through wintry rigours unimpair'd endure.
What is fanatic frenzy, scorn'd so much,
And dreaded more than a contagious touch?
I grant it dangerous, and approve your fear;
That fire is catching if you draw too near;
But sage observers oft mistake the flame,
And give true piety that odious name.
To tremble (as the creature of an hour
Ought at the view of an Almighty power)
Before His presence, at whose aweful throne
All tremble in all worlds, except our own;
To supplicate his mercy, love his ways,
And prize them above pleasure, wealth, or praise.
Though common sense allow'd a casting voice,
And free from bias, must approve the choice,
Convicts a man fanatic in the extreme,
And wild as madness in the world's esteem.
But that disease, when soberly defined,
Is the false fire of an o'erheated mind;
It views the truth with a distorted eye,
And either warps or lays it useless by:
'Tis narrow, selfish, arrogant, and draws
Its sordid nourishment from man's applause,
And while at heart sin unrelinquish'd lies,
Presumes itself chief favourite of the skies.
'Tis such a light as putrefaction breeds
In fly-blown flesh, whereon the maggot feeds,
Shines in the dark, but usher'd into day,
The stench remains, the lustre dies away.

True bliss, if man may reach it, is composed
Of hearts in union mutually disclosed;
And, farewell else all hope of pure delight,
Those hearts should be reclaim'd, renew'd, upright.
Bad men, profaning friendship's hallow'd name,
Form, in its stead, a covenant of shame,
A dark confederacy against the laws
Of virtue, and religion's glorious cause:
They build each other up with dreadful skill,
As bastions set point blank against God's will,
Enlarge and fortify the dread redoubt,
Deeply resolved to shut a Saviour out,—
Call legions up from hell to back the deed,
And curst with conquest, finally succeed:
But souls that carry on a blest exchange
Of joys they meet with in their heavenly range,
And with a fearless confidence make known
The sorrows sympathy esteems its own,
Daily derive increasing light and force
From such communion in their pleasant course,
Feel less the journey's roughness and its length,
Meet their opposers with united strength,
And one in heart, in interest, and design,
Gird up each other to the race divine.

But Conversation, choose what theme we may,
And chiefly when religion leads the way,
Should flow like waters after summer showers,
Not as if raised by mere mechanic powers.
The Christian in whose soul, though now distress'd,
Lives the dear thought of joys he once possess'd,
When all his glowing language issued forth
With God's deep stamp upon its current worth,

Will speak without disguise, and must impart,
Sad as it is, his undissembling heart,
Abhors constraint, and dares not feign a zeal,
Or seem to boast a fire he does not feel.
The song of Sion is a tasteless thing,
Unless, when rising on a joyful wing,
The soul can mix with the celestial bands,
And give the strain the compass it demands.
Strange tidings these to tell a world who treat
All but their own experience as deceit!
Will they believe, though credulous enough
To swallow much upon much weaker proof,
That there are blest inhabitants of earth,
Partakers of a new ethereal birth,
Their hopes, desires, and purposes estranged
From things terrestrial, and divinely changed,
Their very language of a kind that speaks
The soul's sure interest in the good she seeks,
Who deal with Scripture, its importance felt,
As Tully with philosophy once dealt,
And in the silent watches of the night,
And through the scenes of toil-renewing light,
The social walk, or solitary ride,
Keep still the dear companion at their side?
No,—shame upon a self-disgracing age,
God's work may serve an ape upon a stage
With such a jest as fill'd with hellish glee
Certain invisibles as shrewd as he;
But veneration or respect finds none,
Save from the subjects of that work alone.
The world grown old, her deep discernment shows,
Claps spectacles on her sagacious nose,

Peruses closely the true Christian's face,
And finds it a mere mask of sly grimace,
Usurps God's office, lays his bosom bare,
And finds hypocrisy close-lurking there,
And serving God herself through mere constraint,
Concludes his unfeign'd love of him, a feint.
And yet, God knows, look human nature through,
(And in due time the world shall know it too.)
That since the flowers of Eden felt the blast,
That after man's defection laid all waste,
Sincerity towards the heart-searching God
Has made the new-born creature her abode,
Nor shall be found in unregenerate souls,
Till the last fire burn all between the poles.
Sincerity! Why 'tis his only pride;
Weak and imperfect in all grace beside,
He knows that God demands his heart entire,
And gives him all his just demands require.
Without it, his pretensions were as vain,
As, having it, he deems the world's disdain;
That great defect would cost him not alone
Man's favourable judgement, but his own,
His birthright shaken, and no longer clear,
Than while his conduct proves his heart sincere.
Retort the charge, and let the world be told
She boasts a confidence she does not hold;
That, conscious of her crimes, she feels instead
A cold misgiving, and a killing dread;
That while in health, the ground of her support
Is madly to forget that life is short;
That sick, she trembles, knowing she must die,
Her hope presumption, and her faith a lie.

That while she dotes, and dreams that she believes,
She mocks her Maker, and herself deceives;
Her utmost reach, historical assent,
The doctrines warp'd to what they never meant;
That truth itself is in her head as dull
And useless as a candle in a skull,
And all her love of God a groundless claim,
A trick upon the canvass, painted flame.
Tell her again, the sneer upon her face,
And all her censures of the work of grace,
Are insincere, meant only to conceal
A dread she would not, yet is forced to feel;
That in her heart the Christian she reveres,
And while she seems to scorn him, only fears.

A poet does not work by square or line,
As smiths and joiners perfect a design;
At least we moderns, our attention less,
Beyond the example of our sires digress,
And claim a right to scamper and run wide,
Wherever chance, caprice, or fancy guide.
The world and I fortuitously met,
I owed a trifle and have paid the debt;
She did me wrong, I recompensed the deed,
And, having struck the balance, now proceed.
Perhaps, however, as some years have pass'd
Since she and I conversed together last,
And I have lived recluse in rural shades,
Which seldom a distinct report pervades,
Great changes and new manners have occurr'd,
And blest reforms that I have never heard,
And she may now be as discreet and wise,
As once absurd in all discerning eyes.

Sobriety perhaps may now be found,
Where once intoxication press'd the ground;
The subtle and injurious may be just,
And he grown chaste that was the slave of lust;
Arts once esteem'd may be with shame dismiss'd,
Charity may relax the miser's fist,
The gamester may have cast his cards away,
Forgot to curse, and only kneel to pray.
It has indeed been told me (with what weight,
How credibly, 'tis hard for me to state,)
That fables old, that seem'd for ever mute,
Revived, are hastening into fresh repute,
And gods and goddesses discarded long,
Like useless lumber or a stroller's song,
Are bringing into vogue their heathen train,
And Jupiter bids fair to rule again;
That certain feasts are instituted now,
Where Venus hears the lover's tender vow;
That all Olympus through the country roves,
To consecrate our few remaining groves,
And echo learns politely to repeat
The praise of names for ages obsolete:
That having proved the weakness, it should seem,
Of revelation's ineffectual beam,
To bring the passions under sober sway,
And give the moral springs their proper play,
They mean to try what may at last be done
By stout substantial gods of wood and stone,
And whether Roman rites may not produce
The virtues of old Rome for English use.
May much success attend the pious plan,
May Mercury once more embellish man,

Grace him again with long forgotten arts,
Reclaim his taste and brighten up his parts,
Make him athletic as in days of old,
Learn'd at the bar, in the palæstra bold,
Divest the rougher sex of female airs,
And teach the softer not to copy theirs.
The change shall please, nor shall it matter aught
Who works the wonder, if it be but wrought.
'Tis time, however, if the case stand thus,
For us plain folks and all who side with us,
To build our altar, confident and bold,
And say as stern Elijah said of old,
The strife now stands upon a fair award,
If Israel's Lord be God, then serve the Lord,—
If he be silent, faith is all a whim,
Then Baal is the God, and worship him!
Digression is so much in modern use,
Thought is so rare, and fancy so profuse,
Some never seem so wide of their intent,
As when returning to the theme they meant;
As mendicants, whose business is to roam,
Make every parish but their own their home:
Though such continual zigzags in a book,
Such drunken reelings have an awkward look,
And I had rather creep to what is true
Than rove and stagger with no mark in view;
Yet to consult a little seem'd no crime,
The freakish humour of the present time.
But now, to gather up what seems dispersed,
And touch the subject I design'd at first,
May prove, though much beside the rules of art,
Best for the public, and my wisest part.

And first let no man charge me that I mean
To clothe in sables every social scene,
And give good company a face severe,
As if they met around a father's bier;
For tell some men, that pleasure all their bent,
And laughter all their work, is life mispent,
Their wisdom bursts into this sage reply,
Then mirth is sin, and we should always cry.
To find the medium asks some share of wit,
And therefore 'tis a mark fools never hit.
But though life's valley be a vale of tears,
A brighter scene beyond that vale appears,
Whose glory with a light that never fades,
Shoots between scatter'd rocks and opening shades,
And while it shows the land the soul desires,
The language of the land she seeks, inspires.
Thus touch'd, the tongue receives a sacred cure
Of all that was absurd, profane, impure;
Held within modest bounds, the tide of speech
Pursues the course that truth and nature teach,
No longer labours merely to produce
The pomp of sound, or tinkle without use:
Where'er it winds, the salutary stream,
Sprightly and fresh, enriches every theme,
While all the happy man possess'd before,
The gift of nature or the classic store,
Is made subservient to the grand design
For which Heaven form'd the faculty divine.
So should an idiot, while at large he strays,
Find the sweet lyre on which an artist plays,
With rash and awkward force the chords he shakes,
And grins with wonder at the jar he makes;

But let the wise and well-instructed hand
Once take the shell beneath his just command,
In gentle sounds it seems as it complained
Of the rude injuries it late sustained,
Till tuned at length to some immortal song,
It sounds Jehovah's name, and pours his praise along.

RETIREMENT.

. . . . . *studiis florens ignobilis oti.*
VIRG. Georg. lib. 4.

HACKNEY'D in business, wearied at the oar
Which thousands, once fast chain'd to, quit no more.
But which when life at ebb runs weak and low,
All wish, or seem to wish they could forego,
The statesman, lawyer, merchant, man of trade,
Pants for the refuge of some rural shade,
Where all his long anxieties forgot
Amid the charms of a sequester'd spot,
Or recollected only to gild o'er
And add a smile to what was sweet before,
He may possess the joys he thinks he sees,
Lay his old age upon the lap of ease,
Improve the remnant of his wasted span,
And having lived a trifler, die a man.
Thus conscience pleads her cause within the breast,
Though long rebell'd against, not yet suppress'd,

And calls a creature form'd for God alone,
For Heaven's high purposes and not his own,
Calls him away from selfish ends and aims,
From what debilitates and what inflames,
From cities humming with a restless crowd,
Sordid as active, ignorant as loud,
Whose highest praise is that they live in vain,
The dupes of pleasure, or the slaves of gain,
Where works of man are cluster'd close around,
And works of God are hardly to be found,
To regions where in spite of sin and woe,
Traces of Eden are still seen below,
Where mountain, river, forest, field and grove
Remind him of his Maker's power and love.
'Tis well if look'd for at so late a day,
In the last scene of such a senseless play,
True wisdom will attend his feeble call,
And grace his action ere the curtain fall.
Souls that have long despised their heavenly birth,
Their wishes all impregnated with earth,
For threescore years employed with ceaseless care
In catching smoke and feeding upon air,
Conversant only with the ways of men,
Rarely redeem the short remaining ten.
Inveterate habits choke the unfruitful heart,
Their fibres penetrate its tenderest part,
And draining its nutritious powers to feed
Their noxious growth, starve every better seed.
Happy if full of days,—but happier far
If ere we yet discern life's evening star,
Sick of the service of a world that feeds
Its patient drudges with dry chaff and weeds,

We can escape from custom's idiot sway,
To serve the Sovereign we were born to obey.
Then sweet to muse upon his skill display'd
(Infinite skill) in all that he has made!
To trace in Nature's most minute design,
The signature and stamp of power divine,
Contrivance intricate express'd with ease,
Where unassisted sight no beauty sees,
The shapely limb and lubricated joint,
Within the small dimensions of a point,
Muscle and nerve miraculously spun,
His mighty work who speaks and it is done,
The invisible in things scarce seen reveal'd,
To whom an atom is an ample field.
To wonder at a thousand insect forms,
These hatch'd, and those resuscitated worms,
New life ordain'd and brighter scenes to share,
Once prone on earth, now buoyant upon air,
Whose shape would make them, had they bulk and size,
More hideous foes than fancy can devise;
With helmed heads and dragon scales adorn'd,
The mighty myriads, now securely scorn'd,
Would mock the majesty of man's high birth,
Despise his bulwarks and unpeople earth.
Then with a glance of fancy to survey,
Far as the faculty can stretch away,
Ten thousand rivers poured at his command
From urns that never fail through every land,
These like a deluge with impetuous force,
Those winding modestly a silent course,
The cloud-surmounting alps, the fruitful vales,
Seas on which every nation spreads her sails,

The sun, a world whence other worlds drink light,
The crescent moon, the diadem of night,
Stars countless, each in his appointed place,
Fast anchor'd in the deep abyss of space,—
At such a sight to catch the poet's flame,
And with a rapture like his own exclaim,
These are thy glorious works, thou Source of good,
How dimly seen, how faintly understood!
Thine, and upheld by thy paternal care,
This universal frame, thus wondrous fair;
Thy power divine and bounty beyond thought,
Adored and praised in all that thou hast wrought,
Absorbed in that immensity I see,
I shrink abased, and yet aspire to thee;
Instruct me, guide me to that heavenly day,
Thy words, more clearly than thy works display,
That while thy truths my grosser thoughts refine,
I may resemble thee and call thee mine.
O blest proficiency! surpassing all
That men erroneously their glory call,
The recompense that arts or arms can yield,
The bar, the senate, or the tented field.
Compared with this sublimest life below,
Ye kings and rulers, what have courts to show?
Thus studied, used and consecrated thus,
Whatever *is*, seems form'd indeed for us,
Not as the plaything of a froward child,
Fretful unless diverted and beguiled,
Much less to feed and fan the fatal fires
Of pride, ambition, or impure desires;
But as a scale by which the soul ascends
From mighty means to more important ends,

Securely, though by steps but rarely trod,
Mounts from inferior beings up to God,
And sees by no fallacious light or dim,
Earth made for man, and man himself for Him.
Not that I mean to approve, or would enforce
A superstitious and monastic course:
Truth is not local; God alike pervades
And fills the world of traffic and the shades,
And may be fear'd amid the busiest scenes,
Or scorn'd where business never intervenes.
But 'tis not easy with a mind like ours,
Conscious of weakness in its noblest powers,
And in a world where (other ills apart)
The roving eye misleads the careless heart,
To limit thought, by nature prone to stray
Wherever freakish fancy points the way;
To bid the pleadings of self-love be still,
Resign our own and seek our Maker's will;
To spread the page of Scripture, and compare
Our conduct with the laws engraven there;
To measure all that passes in the breast,
Faithfully, fairly, by that sacred test,
To dive into the secret deeps within,
To spare no passion and no favourite sin,
And search the themes important above all,
Ourselves and our recovery from our fall.
But leisure, silence, and a mind released
From anxious thoughts how wealth may be increased,
How to secure in some propitious hour,
The point of interest or the post of power;
A soul serene, and equally retired
From objects too much dreaded or desired,

Safe from the clamours of perverse dispute,
At least are friendly to the great pursuit.
  Opening the map of God's extensive plan,
We find a little isle, this life of man;
Eternity's unknown expanse appears
Circling around and limiting his years;
The busy race examine and explore
Each creek and cavern of the dangerous shore,
With care collect what in their eyes excels,
Some shining pebbles, and some weeds and shells,
Thus laden, dream that they are rich and great,
And happiest he that groans beneath his weight;
The waves o'ertake them in their serious play,
And every hour sweep multitudes away;
They shriek and sink, survivors start and weep,
Pursue their sport, and follow to the deep.
A few forsake the throng, with lifted eyes
Ask wealth of Heaven, and gain a real prize,
Truth, wisdom, grace, and peace like that above,
Seal'd with his signet whom they serve and love;
Scorn'd by the rest, with patient hope they wait
A kind release from their imperfect state,
And unregretted are soon snatch'd away
From scenes of sorrow into glorious day.
  Nor these alone prefer a life recluse,
Who seek retirement for its proper use;
The love of change that lives in every breast,
Genius, and temper, and desire of rest,
Discordant motives in one centre meet,
And each inclines its votary to retreat.
Some minds by nature are averse to noise,
And hate the tumult half the world enjoys,

The lure of avarice, or the pompous prize
That courts display before ambitious eyes,
The fruits that hang on pleasure's flowery stem,
Whate'er enchants them are no snares to them.
To them the deep recess of dusky groves,
Or forest where the deer securely roves,
The fall of waters and the song of birds,
And hills that echo to the distant herds,
Are luxuries excelling all the glare
The world can boast, and her chief favourites share.
With eager step and carelessly array'd,
For such a cause the poet seeks the shade,
From all he sees he catches new delight,
Pleased fancy claps her pinions at the sight,
The rising or the setting orb of day,
The clouds that flit or slowly float away,
Nature in all the various shapes she wears,
Frowning in storms or breathing gentle airs,
The snowy robe her wintry state assumes,
Her summer heats, her fruits, and her perfumes,
All, all alike transport the glowing bard,
Success in rhyme his glory and reward.
O Nature! whose Elysian scenes disclose
His bright perfections at whose word they rose,
Next to that Power who form'd thee and sustains,
Be thou the great inspirer of my strains.
Still as I touch the lyre, do thou expand
Thy genuine charms, and guide an artless hand,
That I may catch a fire but rarely known,
Give useful light though I should miss renown,
And poring on thy page, whose every line
Bears proofs of an intelligence divine,

May feel a heart enrich'd by what it pays,
That builds its glory on its Maker's praise.
Woe to the man whose wit disclaims its use,
Glittering in vain, or only to seduce,
Who studies nature with a wanton eye,
Admires the work, but slips the lesson by,—
His hours of leisure and recess employs,
In drawing pictures of forbidden joys,
Retires to blazon his own worthless name,
Or shoot the careless with a surer aim.

The lover too shuns business and alarms,
Tender idolator of absent charms.
Saints offer nothing in their warmest prayers,
That he devotes not with a zeal like theirs;
'Tis consecration of his heart, soul, time,
And every thought that wanders is a crime.
In sighs he worships his supremely fair,
And weeps a sad libation in despair,
Adores a creature, and devout in vain,
Wins in return an answer of disdain.
As woodbine weds the plants within her reach,
Rough elm, or smooth-grain'd ash, or glossy beech,
In spiral rings ascends the trunk, and lays
Her golden tassels on the leafy sprays,
But does a mischief while she lends a grace,
Straitening its growth by such a strict embrace,
So love that clings around the noblest minds,
Forbids the advancement of the soul he binds;
The suitor's air indeed he soon improves,
And forms it to the taste of her he loves,
Teaches his eyes a language, and no less
Refines his speech and fashions his address;

But farewell promises of happier fruits,
Manly designs, and learning's grave pursuits;
Girt with a chain he cannot wish to break,
His only bliss is sorrow for her sake,
Who will may pant for glory and excel,
Her smile his aim, all higher aims farewell!
Thyrsis, Alexis, or whatever name
May least offend against so pure a flame,
Though sage advice of friends the most sincere
Sounds harshly in so delicate an ear,
And lovers, of all creatures tame or wild,
Can least brook management, however mild,
Yet let a poet (poetry disarms
The fiercest animals with magic charms)
Risk an intrusion on thy pensive mood,
And woo and win thee to thy proper good.
Pastoral images and still retreats,
Umbrageous walks and solitary seats,
Sweet birds in concert with harmonious streams,
Soft airs, nocturnal vigils, and day dreams,
Are all enchantments in a case like thine,
Conspire against thy peace with one design,
Sooth thee to make thee but a surer prey,
And feed the fire that wastes thy powers away.
Up!—God has formed thee with a wiser view,
Not to be led in chains, but to subdue,
Calls thee to cope with enemies, and first
Points out a conflict with thyself, the worst.
Woman indeed, a gift he would bestow
When he design'd a paradise below,
The richest earthly boon his hands afford,
Deserves to be beloved, but not adored.

Post away swiftly to more active scenes,
Collect the scatter'd truths that study gleans,
Mix with the world, but with its wiser part,
No longer give an image all thine heart;
Its empire is not hers, nor is it thine,
'Tis God's just claim, prerogative divine.

Virtuous and faithful Heberden, whose skill
Attempts no task it cannot well fulfil,
Gives melancholy up to Nature's care,
And sends the patient into purer air.
Look where he comes,—in this embower'd alcove,
Stand close conceal'd, and see a statue move:
Lips busy, and eyes fix'd, foot falling slow,
Arms hanging idly down, hands clasp'd below[1],
Interpret to the marking eye distress,
Such as its symptoms can alone express.
That tongue is silent now,—that silent tongue
Could argue once, could jest or join the song,
Could give advice, could censure or commend,
Or charm the sorrows of a drooping friend.
Renounced alike its office and its sport,
Its brisker and its graver strains fall short,
Both fail beneath a fever's secret sway,
And like a summer brook are past away.
This is a sight for pity to peruse
Till she resemble faintly what she views,
Till sympathy contract a kindred pain,
Pierced with the woes that she laments in vain.

[1] Arms cross'd, brows bent, eyes fix'd, feet marching slow,
A band of malcontents with spleen o'erflow.
Churchill. Rosciad, 487.

This of all maladies that man infest,
Claims most compassion and receives the least;
Job felt it when he groan'd beneath the rod,
And the barb'd arrows of a frowning God,
And such emollients as his friends could spare,
Friends such as his for modern Jobs prepare.
Blest (rather curst) with hearts that never feel,
Kept snug in caskets of close-hammer'd steel,
With mouths made only to grin wide and eat,
And minds that deem derided pain a treat;
With limbs of British oak and nerves of wire,
And wit that puppet-prompters might inspire,
Their sovereign nostrum is a clumsy joke,
On pangs enforced with God's severest stroke.
But with a soul that ever felt the sting
Of sorrow, sorrow is a sacred thing:
Not to molest, or irritate, or raise
A laugh at its expense, is slender praise;
He that has not usurp'd the name of man,
Does all, and deems too little, all he can,
To assuage the throbbings of the fester'd part,
And stanch the bleedings of a broken heart.
'Tis not, as heads that never ache suppose,
Forgery of fancy and a dream of woes;
Man is a harp whose chords elude the sight,
Each yielding harmony, disposed aright,
The screws reversed, (a task which if he please
God in a moment executes with ease,)
Ten thousand thousand strings at once go loose,
Lost, till he tune them, all their power and use.
Then neither heathy wilds, nor scenes as fair
As ever recompensed the peasant's care,

Nor soft declivities with tufted hills,
Nor view of waters turning busy mills,
Parks in which art preceptress nature weds,
Nor gardens interspersed with flowery beds,
Nor gales that catch the scent of blooming groves,
And waft it to the mourner as he roves,
Can call up life into his faded eye,
That passes all he sees unheeded by:
No wounds like those a wounded spirit feels,
No cure for such, till God who makes them heals.
And thou sad sufferer under nameless ill,
That yields not to the touch of human skill,
Improve the kind occasion, understand
A father's frown, and kiss his chastening hand:
To thee the day-spring and the blaze of noon,
The purple evening and resplendent moon,
The stars, that sprinkled o'er the vault of night
Seem drops descending in a shower of light,
Shine not, or undesired and hated shine,
Seen through the medium of a cloud like thine;
Yet seek Him, in his favour life is found,
All bliss beside, a shadow or a sound:
Then Heaven eclipsed so long, and this dull earth
Shall seem to start into a second birth;
Nature assuming a more lovely face,
Borrowing a beauty from the works of grace,
Shall be despised and overlook'd no more,
Shall fill thee with delights unfelt before,
Impart to things inanimate a voice,
And bid her mountains and her hills rejoice;
The sound shall run along the winding vales,
And thou enjoy an Eden ere it fails.

Ye groves, (the statesman at his desk exclaims,
Sick of a thousand disappointed aims,)
My patrimonial treasure and my pride,
Beneath your shades your grey possessor hide!
Receive me languishing for that repose
The servant of the public never knows.
Ye saw me once, (ah those regretted days
When boyish innocence was all my praise,)
Hour after hour delightfully allot
To studies then familiar, since forgot,
And cultivate a taste for ancient song,
Catching its ardour as I mused along;
Nor seldom, as propitious Heaven might send,
What once I valued and could boast, a friend,
Were witnesses how cordially I press'd
His undissembling virtue to my breast;
Receive me now, not uncorrupt as then,
Nor guiltless of corrupting other men,
But versed in arts that while they seem to stay
A fallen empire, hasten its decay.
To the fair haven of my native home,
The wreck of what I was, fatigued I come;
For once I can approve the patriot's voice,
And make the course he recommends my choice;
We meet at last in one sincere desire,—
His wish and mine both prompt me to retire.
'Tis done;—he steps into the welcome chaise,
Lolls at his ease behind four handsome bays,
That whirl away from business and debate
The disencumber'd Atlas of the state.
Ask not the boy, who when the breeze of morn
First shakes the glittering drops from every thorn,

Unfolds his flock, then under bank or bush
Sits linking cherry-stones or platting rush,
How fair is freedom?—he was always free:
To carve his rustic name upon a tree,
To snare the mole, or with ill-fashion'd hook
To draw the incautious minnow from the brook,
Are life's prime pleasures in his simple view,
His flock the chief concern he ever knew:
She shines but little in his heedless eyes,
The good we never miss we rarely prize.
But ask the noble drudge in state affairs,
Escaped from office and its constant cares,
What charms he sees in freedom's smile express'd,
In freedom lost so long, now repossess'd;
The tongue whose strains were cogent as commands,
Revered at home, and felt in foreign lands,
Shall own itself a stammerer in that cause,
Or plead its silence as its best applause.
He knows indeed that whether dress'd or rude,
Wild without art, or artfully subdued,
Nature in every form inspires delight,
But never mark'd her with so just a sight.
Her hedge-row shrubs, a variegated store,
With woodbine and wild roses mantled o'er,
Green balks and furrow'd lands, the stream that spreads
Its cooling vapour o'er the dewy meads,
Downs that almost escape the enquiring eye,
That melt and fade into the distant sky,
Beauties he lately slighted as he pass'd,
Seem all created since he travell'd last.
Master of all the enjoyments he design'd,
No rough annoyance rankling in his mind,

What early philosophic hours he keeps,
How regular his meals, how sound he sleeps!
Not sounder he that on the mainmast head,
While morning kindles with a windy red,
Begins a long look-out for distant land,
Nor quits till evening-watch his giddy stand,
Then swift descending with a seaman's haste,
Slips to his hammock, and forgets the blast.
He chooses company, but not the squire's,
Whose wit is rudeness, whose good breeding tires;
Nor yet the parson's, who would gladly come,
Obsequious when abroad, though proud at home;
Nor can he much affect the neighb'ring peer,
Whose toe of emulation treads too near,
But wisely seeks a more convenient friend,
With whom, dismissing forms, he may unbend,—
A man whom marks of condescending grace
Teach, while they flatter him, his proper place,—
Who comes when call'd, and at a word withdraws,
Speaks with reserve, and listens with applause;
Some plain mechanic, who without pretence
To birth or wit, nor gives nor takes offence,
On whom he rests well pleased his weary powers,
And talks and laughs away his vacant hours.
The tide of life, swift always in its course,
May run in cities with a brisker force,
But no where with a current so serene,
Or half so clear as in the rural scene.
Yet how fallacious is all earthly bliss,
What obvious truths the wisest heads may miss!
Some pleasures live a month, and some a year,
But short the date of all we gather here,

Nor happiness is felt, except the true,
That does not charm the more for being new.
This observation, as it chanced, not made,
Or if the thought occurr'd, not duly weigh'd,
He sighs,—for after all, by slow degrees,
The spot he loved has lost the power to please;
To cross his ambling poney day by day
Seems at the best but dreaming life away;
The prospect, such as might enchant despair,
He views it not, or sees no beauty there,
With aching heart and discontented looks,
Returns at noon to billiards or to books,
But feels while grasping at his faded joys
A secret thirst of his renounced employs;
He chides the tardiness of every post,
Pants to be told of battles won or lost,
Blames his own indolence, observes, though late,
'Tis criminal to leave a sinking state,
Flies to the levee, and received with grace,
Kneels, kisses hands, and shines again in place.
  Suburban villas, highway-side retreats,
That dread the encroachment of our growing streets,
Tight boxes neatly sash'd, and in a blaze
With all a July sun's collected rays,
Delight the citizen, who gasping there
Breathes clouds of dust, and calls it country air.
O sweet retirement, who would baulk the thought
That could afford retirement, or could not?
'Tis such an easy walk, so smooth and straight,—
The second milestone fronts the garden gate;
A step if fair, and if a shower approach
You find safe shelter in the next stage-coach.

There prison'd in a parlour snug and small,
Like bottled wasps upon a southern wall,
The man of business and his friends compress'd,
Forget their labours, and yet find no rest;
But still 'tis rural,—trees are to be seen
From every window, and the fields are green;
Ducks paddle in the pond before the door,
And what could a remoter scene show more?
A sense of elegance we rarely find
The portion of a mean or vulgar mind,
And ignorance of better things makes man
Who cannot much, rejoice in what he can;
And he that deems his leisure well bestow'd
In contemplations of a turnpike road,
Is occupied as well, employs his hours
As wisely, and as much improves his powers,
As he that slumbers in pavilions graced
With all the charms of an accomplish'd taste.
Yet hence, alas! insolvencies, and hence
The unpitied victim of ill-judged expense,
From all his wearisome engagements freed,
Shakes hands with business, and retires indeed.

Your prudent grandmammas, ye modern belles,
Content with Bristol, Bath, and Tunbridge Wells,
When health required it, would consent to roam,
Else more attach'd to pleasures found at home;
But now alike, gay widow, virgin, wife,
Ingenious to diversify dull life,
In coaches, chaises, caravans, and hoys,
Fly to the coast for daily, nightly joys,
And all impatient of dry land, agree
With one consent to rush into the sea.—

Ocean exhibits, fathomless and broad,
Much of the power and majesty of God;
He swathes about the swelling of the deep,
That shines and rests[2], as infants smile and sleep;
Vast as it is, it answers as it flows
The breathings of the lightest air that blows;
Curling and whitening over all the waste,
The rising waves obey the increasing blast,
Abrupt and horrid as the tempest roars,
Thunder and flash upon the steadfast shores;
Till he that rides the whirlwind checks the rein,
Then all the world of waters sleeps again.
Nereids or Dryads, as the fashion leads,
Now in the floods, now panting in the meads,
Votaries of pleasure still, where'er she dwells,
Near barren rocks, in palaces, or cells,
Oh grant a poet leave to recommend,
(A poet fond of nature and your friend,)
Her slighted works to your admiring view,
Her works must needs excel who fashion'd you.
Would ye, when rambling in your morning ride,
With some unmeaning coxcomb at your side,
Condemn the prattler for his idle pains,
To waste unheard the music of his strains,
And deaf to all the impertinence of tongue,
That, while it courts, affronts and does you wrong,
Mark well the finish'd plan without a fault,
The seas globose and huge, the o'erarching vault,

[2] And the midnight moon is weaving
Her bright chain o'er the deep,
Whose breast is gently heaving
As an infant's asleep. *Lord Byron.*

Earth's millions daily fed, a world employ'd
In gathering plenty yet to be enjoy'd,
Till gratitude grew vocal in the praise
Of God, beneficent in all his ways,—
Graced with such wisdom how would beauty shine!
Ye want but that to seem indeed divine.
Anticipated rents and bills unpaid
Force many a shining youth into the shade,
Not to redeem his time, but his estate,
And play the fool, but at a cheaper rate.
There hid in loath'd obscurity, removed
From pleasures left, but never more beloved,
He just endures, and with a sickly spleen
Sighs o'er the beauties of the charming scene.
Nature indeed looks prettily in rhyme,
Streams tinkle sweetly in poetic chime,
The warblings of the blackbird, clear and strong,
Are musical enough in Thomson's song,
And Cobham's groves and Windsor's green retreats,
When Pope describes them, have a thousand sweets:
He likes the country, but in truth must own,
Most likes it when he studies it in town.
Poor Jack—no matter who,—for when I blame
I pity, and must therefore sink the name,—
Lived in his saddle, loved the chase, the course,
And always, ere he mounted, kiss'd his horse.
The estate his sires had own'd in ancient years
Was quickly distanced,—match'd against a peer's.
Jack vanish'd, was regretted and forgot;
'Tis wild good-nature's never-failing lot.
At length, when all had long supposed him dead,
By cold submersion, razor, rope, or lead,

My lord, alighting at his usual place,
The Crown, took notice of an ostler's face.
Jack knew his friend, but hoped in that disguise
He might escape the most observing eyes,
And whistling as if unconcern'd and gay,
Curried his nag and look'd another way.
Convinced at last, upon a nearer view,
'Twas he, the same, the very Jack he knew,
O'erwhelm'd at once with wonder, grief, and joy,
He press'd him much to quit his base employ,—
His countenance, his purse, his heart, his hand,
Influence, and power were all at his command.
Peers are not always generous as well-bred;
But Granby was,—meant truly what he said.
Jack bow'd, and was obliged;—confess'd 'twas strange
That so retired he should not wish a change,
But knew no medium between guzzling beer
And his old stint, three thousand pounds a year.

Thus some retire to nourish hopeless woe,
Some seeking happiness not found below,
Some to comply with humour, and a mind
To social scenes by nature disinclined,
Some sway'd by fashion, some by deep disgust,
Some self-impoverish'd, and because they must;
But few that court Retirement are aware
Of half the toils they must encounter there.

Lucrative offices are seldom lost
For want of powers proportion'd to the post:
Give even a dunce the employment he desires,
And he soon finds the talents it requires;
A business with an income at its heels
Furnishes always oil for its own wheels.

But in his arduous enterprise to close
His active years with indolent repose,
He finds the labours of that state exceed
His utmost faculties, severe indeed.
'Tis easy to resign a toilsome place,
But not to manage leisure with a grace;
Absence of occupation is not rest,
A mind quite vacant is a mind distress'd.
The veteran steed excused his task at length,
In kind compassion of his failing strength,
And turn'd into the park or mead to graze,
Exempt from future service all his days,
There feels a pleasure perfect in its kind,
Ranges at liberty, and snuffs the wind.
But when his lord would quit the busy road,
To taste a joy like that he has bestow'd,
He proves, less happy than his favour'd brute,
A life of ease a difficult pursuit.
Thought, to the man that never thinks, may seem
As natural as when asleep to dream;
But reveries, (for human minds will act,)
Specious in show, impossible in fact,
Those flimsy webs that break as soon as wrought,
Attain not to the dignity of thought;
Nor yet the swarms that occupy the brain,
Where dreams of dress, intrigue, and pleasure reign,
Nor such as useless conversation breeds,
Or lust engenders, and indulgence feeds.
Whence, and what are we? to what end ordain'd?
What means the drama by the world sustain'd?
Business or vain amusement, care, or mirth,
Divide the frail inhabitants of earth.

Is duty a mere sport, or an employ?
Life an intrusted talent, or a toy?
Is there, as reason, conscience, scripture, say,
Cause to provide for a great future day,
When earth's assign'd duration at an end,
Man shall be summon'd, and the dead attend?
The trumpet,—will it sound? the curtain rise?
And show the august tribunal of the skies,
Where no prevarication shall avail,
Where eloquence and artifice shall fail,
The pride of arrogant distinctions fall,
And conscience and our conduct judge us all?
Pardon me, ye that give the midnight oil
To learned cares or philosophic toil,
Though I revere your honourable names,
Your useful labours and important aims,
And hold the world indebted to your aid,
Enrich'd with the discoveries ye have made,
Yet let me stand excused, if I esteem
A mind employ'd on so sublime a theme,
Pushing her bold enquiry to the date
And outline of the present transient state,
And after poising her adventurous wings,
Settling at last upon eternal things,
Far more intelligent, and better taught
The strenuous use of profitable thought,
Than ye when happiest, and enlighten'd most,
And highest in renown, can justly boast.

A mind unnerved, or indisposed to bear
The weight of subjects worthiest of her care,
Whatever hopes a change of scene inspires,
Must change her nature, or in vain retires.

An idler is a watch that wants both hands,
As useless if it goes as when it stands.
Books therefore, not the scandal of the shelves,
In which lewd sensualists print out themselves,
Nor those in which the stage gives vice a blow,
(With what success let modern manners show;)
Nor his, who for the bane of thousands born,
Built God[3] a church, and laugh'd his word to scorn,

[3] Deo erexit Voltaire.

In Voltaire's bed-room at Ferney is a sort of monument in bad taste, with something like an urn in the middle, and these words,—*Son esprit est partout, et son cœur est,—ici* it would have said, but the heart was not there, any more than the *manes* which some verses above had engaged to be there also. In a grove some hundred yards distant there is a flat black marble monument thus inscribed:

Au Chantre
du Père des Bourbons.
Au Fondateur
de
Ferney.

This monument is covered with a black pyramid of wood, to preserve it from the weather. Some devotee of the arch-infidel had chalked upon this covering with great precision of hand an eulogistic epigram quite worthy of being written in chalk upon wood:

Voltaire, des hommes la gloire et le flambeau,
meritoit les honneurs suprémes;
et s'il etoit dans son tombeau
les lauriers y croîtroient d'eux-memes.

The offerings which had recently been placed on the top of this pyramidal covering, (not in derision,) were literally a withered laurel wreath, a worse quill than ever pen was made of, and a child's penny trumpet.—*MS. Journal.* 1817.

Skilful alike to seem devout and just,
And stab religion with a sly side-thrust;
Nor those of learn'd philologists, who chase
A panting syllable through time and space,
Start it at home, and hunt it in the dark,
To Gaul, to Greece, and into Noah's ark;
But such as learning without false pretence,
The friend of truth, the associate of sound sense,
And such as in the zeal of good design,
Strong judgement labouring in the scripture mine,
All such as manly and great souls produce,
Worthy to live, and of eternal use;
Behold in these what leisure hours demand,
Amusement and true knowledge hand in hand.
Luxury gives the mind a childish cast,
And while she polishes, perverts the taste;
Habits of close attention, thinking heads,
Become more rare as dissipation spreads,
Till authors hear at length, one general cry,
Tickle and entertain us, or we die!
The loud demand from year to year the same,
Beggars invention and makes fancy lame;
Till farce itself, most mournfully *jejune*,
Calls for the kind assistance of a tune,
And novels, (witness every month's Review,)
Belie their name, and offer nothing new.
The mind relaxing into needful sport,
Should turn to writers of an abler sort,
Whose wit well managed, and whose classic style
Give truth a lustre, and make wisdom smile.

Friends, (for I cannot stint as some have done,
Too rigid in my view, that name to one,

Though one, I grant it in the generous breast,
Will stand advanced a step above the rest;
Flowers by that name promiscuously we call,
But one, the rose, the regent of them all;)
Friends, not adopted with a schoolboy's haste,
But chosen with a nice discerning taste,
Well born, well disciplined, who, placed apart
From vulgar minds, have honour much at heart,
And (though the world may think the ingredients odd)
The love of virtue, and the fear of God[4]!
Such friends prevent what else would soon succeed.
A temper rustic as the life we lead,
And keep the polish of the manners clean,
As theirs who bustle in the busiest scene.
For solitude, however some may rave,
Seeming a sanctuary, proves a grave,
A sepulchre in which the living lie,
Where all good qualities grow sick and die.
I praise the Frenchman[5], his remark was shrewd,—
How sweet, how passing sweet is solitude!
But grant me still a friend in my retreat,
Whom I may whisper, solitude is sweet.
Yet neither these delights, nor aught beside
That appetite can ask, or wealth provide,
Can save us always from a tedious day,
Or shine the dullness of still life away;

[4] I fear not man, nor devil; but, though odd,
I'm not ashamed to own I fear my God.

The two last lines of some brave man's answer to a challenge, which have stuck in my memory ever since I was at school: but the other two have slipped out of it. P.

[5] Bruyere.

Divine communion carefully enjoy'd,
Or sought with energy, must fill the void.
Oh sacred art, to which alone life owes
Its happiest seasons, and a peaceful close,
Scorn'd in a world indebted to that scorn
For evils daily felt and hardly borne,
Not knowing thee, we reap with bleeding hands
Flowers of rank odour upon thorny lands,
And while experience cautions us in vain,
Grasp seeming happiness, and find it pain.
Despondence, self-deserted in her grief,
Lost by abandoning her own relief;
Murmuring and ungrateful discontent,
That scorns afflictions mercifully meant;
Those humours tart as wines upon the fret,
Which idleness and weariness beget;
These and a thousand plagues that haunt the breast,
Fond of the phantom of an earthly rest,
Divine communion chases, as the day
Drives to their dens the obedient beasts of prey.
See Judah's promised king, bereft of all,
Driven out an exile from the face of Saul,
To distant caves the lonely wanderer flies,
To seek that peace a tyrant's frown denies.
Hear the sweet accents of his tuneful voice,
Hear him o'erwhelm'd with sorrow, yet rejoice;
No womanish or wailing grief has part,
No, not a moment, in his royal heart;
'Tis manly music, such as martyrs make,
Suffering with gladness for a Saviour's sake:
His soul exults, hope animates his lays,
The sense of mercy kindles into praise,

And wilds familiar with the lion's roar
Ring with ecstatic sounds unheard before.
'Tis love like his that can alone defeat
The foes of man, or make a desert sweet.
Religion does not censure or exclude
Unnumber'd pleasures harmlessly pursued.
To study culture, and with artful toil
To meliorate and tame the stubborn soil;
To give dissimilar yet fruitful lands
The grain or herb or plant that each demands;
To cherish virtue in an humble state,
And share the joys your bounty may create;
To mark the matchless workings of the power
That shuts within its seed the future flower,
Bids these in elegance of form excel,
In colour these, and those delight the smell,
Sends Nature forth, the daughter of the skies,
To dance on earth, and charm all human eyes;
To teach the canvass innocent deceit,
Or lay the landscape on the snowy sheet;
These, these are arts pursued without a crime,
That leave no stain upon the wing of time.
Me poetry (or rather notes that aim
Feebly and vainly at poetic fame,)
Employs, shut out from more important views,
Fast by the banks of the slow-winding Ouse;
Content if thus sequester'd I may raise
A monitor's, though not a poet's praise,
And while I teach an art too little known,
To close life wisely, may not waste my own.

THE DOVES.

Reasoning at every step he treads,
Man yet mistakes his way,
While meaner things whom instinct leads
Are rarely known to stray.

One silent eve I wander'd late,
And heard the voice of love;
The turtle thus address'd her mate,
And soothed the listening dove:

Our mutual bond of faith and truth,
No time shall disengage;
Those blessings of our early youth
Shall cheer our latest age.

While innocence without disguise,
And constancy sincere,
Shall fill the circles of those eyes,
And mine can read them there,

Those ills that wait on all below
Shall ne'er be felt by me,
Or gently felt, and only so,
As being shared with thee.

When lightnings flash among the trees,
Or kites are hovering near,
I fear lest thee alone they seize,
And know no other fear.

'Tis then I feel myself a wife,
And press thy wedded side,
Resolved a union form'd for life
Death never shall divide.

But oh! if fickle and unchaste,
(Forgive a transient thought,)
Thou couldst become unkind at last,
And scorn thy present lot,

No need of lightnings from on high,
Or kites with cruel beak,
Denied the endearments of thine eye
This widow'd heart would break.

Thus sang the sweet sequester'd bird,
Soft as the passing wind;
And I recorded what I heard,
A lesson for mankind.

A FABLE.

A RAVEN while with glossy breast
Her new-laid eggs she fondly press'd,
And on her wicker-work high mounted
Her chickens prematurely counted,
(A fault philosophers might blame,
If quite exempted from the same,)
Enjoy'd at ease the genial day,
'Twas April as the bumkins say,
The legislature call'd it May:
But suddenly a wind as high
As ever swept a winter sky,
Shook the young leaves about her ears,
And fill'd her with a thousand fears,
Lest the rude blast should snap the bough,
And spread her golden hopes below.

But just at eve the blowing weather
And all her fears were hush'd together:
And now, quoth poor unthinking Raph,
'Tis over, and the brood is safe;
(For ravens, though as birds of omen
They teach both conjurers and old women
To tell us what is to befall,
Can't prophesy themselves at all.)
The morning came, when neighbour Hodge,
Who long had mark'd her airy lodge,
And destined all the treasure there
A gift to his expecting fair,
Climb'd like a squirrel to his dray,
And bore the worthless prize away.

MORAL.

'Tis Providence alone secures,
In every change, both mine and your's.
Safety consists not in escape
From dangers of a frightful shape,
An earthquake may be bid to spare
The man that's strangled by a hair.
Fate steals along with silent tread,
Found oftenest in what least we dread,
Frowns in the storm with angry brow,
But in the sunshine strikes the blow.

A COMPARISON.

The lapse of time and rivers is the same,
Both speed their journey with a restless stream,
The silent pace with which they steal away,
No wealth can bribe, no prayers persuade to stay,
Alike irrevocable both when past,
And a wide ocean swallows both at last.
Though each resemble each in every part,
A difference strikes at length the musing heart;
Streams never flow in vain; where streams abound,
How laughs the land with various plenty crown'd!
But time that should enrich the nobler mind,
Neglected, leaves a dreary waste behind.

ANOTHER.

ADDRESSED TO A YOUNG LADY.

Sweet stream that winds through yonder glade,
Apt emblem of a virtuous maid—
Silent and chaste she steals along,
Far from the world's gay busy throng,
With gentle yet prevailing force
Intent upon her destined course,
Graceful and useful all she does,
Blessing and blest where'er she goes,
Pure-bosom'd as that watery glass,
And heaven reflected in her face.

VERSES,

SUPPOSED TO BE WRITTEN BY ALEXANDER SELKIRK, DURING HIS SOLITARY ABODE IN THE ISLAND OF JUAN FERNANDEZ.

I AM monarch of all I survey,
My right there is none to dispute,
From the centre all round to the sea,
I am lord of the fowl and the brute.
O solitude! where are the charms
That sages have seen in thy face?
Better dwell in the midst of alarms,
Than reign in this horrible place.

I am out of humanity's reach,
I must finish my journey alone,
Never hear the sweet music of speech,—
I start at the sound of my own.
The beasts that roam over the plain
My form with indifference see,
They are so unacquainted with man,
Their tameness is shocking to me.

Society, friendship, and love,
Divinely bestow'd upon man,
Oh had I the wings of a dove,
How soon would I taste you again!
My sorrows I then might assuage
In the ways of religion and truth,
Might learn from the wisdom of age,
And be cheer'd by the sallies of youth.

Religion! what treasure untold
Resides in that heavenly word!
More precious than silver and gold,
Or all that this earth can afford.

But the sound of the church-going bell
These valleys and rocks never heard,
Ne'er sigh'd at the sound of a knell,
Or smiled when a sabbath appear'd.

Ye winds that have made me your sport,
Convey to this desolate shore
Some cordial endearing report
Of a land I shall visit no more!
My friends, do they now and then send
A wish or a thought after me?
Oh tell me I yet have a friend,
Though a friend I am never to see.

How fleet is a glance of the mind!
Compared with the speed of its flight,
The tempest itself lags behind,
And the swift winged arrows of light.
When I think of my own native land,
In a moment I seem to be there;
But alas! recollection at hand
Soon hurries me back to despair.

But the sea-fowl is gone to her nest,
The beast is laid down in his lair,
Even here is a season of rest,
And I to my cabin repair.
There is mercy in every place,
And mercy, encouraging thought!
Gives even affliction a grace,
And reconciles man to his lot.

ON THE

PROMOTION OF EDWARD THURLOW, ESQ.

TO THE

LORD HIGH CHANCELLORSHIP OF ENGLAND.

Round Thurlow's head in early youth,
And in his sportive days,
Fair science pour'd the light of truth,
And genius shed his rays.

See! with united wonder, cried
The experienced and the sage,
Ambition in a boy supplied
With all the skill of age.

Discernment, eloquence, and grace
Proclaim him born to sway
The balance in the highest place,
And bear the palm away.

The praise bestow'd was just and wise;
He sprang impetuous forth,
Secure of conquest, where the prize
Attends superior worth.

So the best courser on the plain
Ere yet he starts is known,
And does but at the goal obtain
What all had deem'd his own.

ODE TO PEACE.

Come, peace of mind, delightful guest!
Return and make thy downy nest
  Once more in this sad heart:
Nor riches I, nor power pursue,
Nor hold forbidden joys in view,
  We therefore need not part.

Where wilt thou dwell if not with me,
From avarice and ambition free,
  And pleasure's fatal wiles?
For whom, alas! dost thou prepare
The sweets that I was wont to share,
  The banquet of thy smiles?

The great, the gay, shall they partake
The heaven that thou alone canst make;
  And wilt thou quit the stream
That murmurs through the dewy mead,
The grove and the sequester'd shed,
  To be a guest with them?

For thee I panted, thee I prized,
For thee I gladly sacrificed
  Whate'er I loved before;
And shall I see thee start away,
And helpless, hopeless, hear thee say—
  Farewell! we meet no more?

HUMAN FRAILTY.

Weak and irresolute is man;
The purpose of to-day,
Woven with pains into his plan,
To-morrow rends away.

The bow well bent and smart the spring,
Vice seems already slain,
But passion rudely snaps the string,
And it revives again.

Some foe to his upright intent
Finds out his weaker part,
Virtue engages his assent,
But pleasure wins his heart.

'Tis here the folly of the wise
Through all his art we view,
And while his tongue the charge denies,
His conscience owns it true.

Bound on a voyage of aweful length
And dangers little known,
A stranger to superior strength,
Man vainly trusts his own.

But oars alone can ne'er prevail
To reach the distant coast,
The breath of heaven must swell the sail,
Or all the toil is lost.

THE MODERN PATRIOT.

Rebellion is my theme all day,
I only wish 'twould come
(As who knows but perhaps it may)
A little nearer home.

Yon roaring boys who rave and fight
On the other side the Atlantic,
I always held them in the right,
But most so, when most frantic.

When lawless mobs insult the court,
That man shall be my toast,
If breaking windows be the sport
Who bravely breaks the most.

But oh! for him my fancy culls
The choicest flowers she bears,
Who constitutionally pulls
Your house about your ears.

Such civil broils are my delight,
Though some folks can't endure 'em.
Who say the mob are mad outright,
And that a rope must cure 'em.

A rope! I wish we patriots had
Such strings for all who need 'em,—
What! hang a man for going mad?
Then farewell British freedom.

ON

OBSERVING SOME NAMES OF LITTLE NOTE

RECORDED IN THE BIOGRAPHIA BRITANNICA.

Oh fond attempt to give a deathless lot,
To names ignoble, born to be forgot!
In vain recorded in historic page,
They court the notice of a future age,
Those twinkling tiny lustres of the land
Drop one by one from fame's neglecting hand,
Lethean gulfs receive them as they fall,
And dark oblivion soon absorbs them all.
So when a child, as playful children use,
Has burnt to tinder a stale last year's news,
The flame extinct, he views the roving fire,
There goes my lady, and there goes the 'squire;
There goes the parson, oh! illustrious spark,
And there, scarce less illustrious, goes the clerk.

REPORT OF AN ADJUDGED CASE

NOT TO BE FOUND IN ANY OF THE BOOKS.

Between Nose and Eyes a strange contest arose,
The spectacles set them unhappily wrong;
The point in dispute was, as all the world knows,
To which the said spectacles ought to belong.

So the Tongue was the lawyer and argued the cause
With a great deal of skill, and a wig full of learning,
While chief baron Ear sat to balance the laws,
So famed for his talent in nicely discerning.

In behalf of the Nose, it will quickly appear,
And your lordship, he said, will undoubtedly find,
That the Nose has had spectacles always in wear,
Which amounts to possession time out of mind.

Then holding the spectacles up to the court,—
Your lordship observes they are made with a straddle.
As wide as the ridge of the Nose is, in short,
Design'd to sit close to it, just like a saddle.

Again, would your lordship a moment suppose
('Tis a case that has happen'd and may be again,)
That the visage or countenance had not a Nose,
Pray who would or who could wear spectacles then?

On the whole it appears, and my argument shows
With a reasoning the court will never condemn,
That the spectacles plainly were made for the Nose,
And the Nose was as plainly intended for them.

Then shifting his side, as a lawyer knows how,
He pleaded again in behalf of the Eyes,
But what were his arguments few people know,
For the court did not think they were equally wise.

So his lordship decreed, with a grave solemn tone,
Decisive and clear, without one if or but,—
That whenever the Nose put his spectacles on,
By daylight or candlelight—Eyes should be shut.

ON THE

BURNING OF LORD MANSFIELD'S LIBRARY,

TOGETHER WITH HIS MSS.

BY THE MOB, IN THE MONTH OF JUNE, 1780.

So then—the Vandals of our isle,
Sworn foes to sense and law,
Have burnt to dust a nobler pile
Than ever Roman saw!

And Murray sighs o'er Pope and Swift,
And many a treasure more,
The well-judged purchase and the gift
That graced his letter'd store.

Their pages mangled, burnt, and torn,
The loss was *his alone;*
But ages yet to come shall mourn
The burning of *his own.*

ON THE SAME.

When wit and genius meet their doom
In all devouring flame,
They tell us of the fate of Rome,
And bid us fear the same.

O'er Murray's loss the Muses wept,
They felt the rude alarm,
Yet bless'd the guardian care that kept
His sacred head from harm.

There memory, like the bee that's fed
From Flora's balmy store,
The quintessence of all he read
Had treasured up before.

The lawless herd, with fury blind
Have done him cruel wrong;
The flowers are gone,—but still we find
The honey on his tongue.

THE LOVE OF THE WORLD REPROVED;

OR,

HYPOCRISY DETECTED[1].

THUS says the prophet of the Turk:
Good mussulman, abstain from pork!
There is a part in every swine
No friend or follower of mine
May taste, whate'er his inclination,
On pain of excommunication.

[1] In a letter to Mr. Thornton, (March 13, 1779, which has been printed in the Congregational Magazine, and which I am obliged to Mr. Blackburne for communicating to me,) Mr. Newton says, "you may perhaps remember the tale of the Mahometan Hog, which I once sent to Mrs. Thornton, Mr. Cowper lately versified it, and I reserve the other side to transmit you a copy. He did it in about an hour; it gives a proof that his faculties are no ways hurt by his long illness, and likewise that the taste and turn of his mind are still the same. The six lines included in brackets are an addition of mine." They are the lines from v. 9 to 14.

Has the well known American expression of "*going the whole hog*" originated from this story?

Such Mahomet's mysterious charge,
And thus he left the point at large.
Had he the sinful part express'd,
They might with safety eat the rest;
But for one piece they thought it hard
From the whole hog to be debarr'd,
And set their wit at work to find
What joint the prophet had in mind.
Much controversy straight arose,
These choose the back, the belly those;
By some 'tis confidently said
He meant not to forbid the head,
While others at that doctrine rail,
And piously prefer the tail.
Thus, conscience freed from every clog,
Mahometans eat up the hog.
You laugh!—'tis well,—the tale applied
May make you laugh on t'other side.
Renounce the world, the preacher cries;—
We do,—a multitude replies.
While one as innocent regards
A snug and friendly game at cards;
And one, whatever you may say,
Can see no evil in a play;
Some love a concert or a race,
And others, shooting and the chase.
Reviled and loved, renounced and follow'd,
Thus bit by bit the world is swallow'd;
Each thinks his neighbour makes too free,
Yet likes a slice as well as he,
With sophistry their sauce they sweeten,
Till quite from tail to snout 'tis eaten.

THE LILY AND THE ROSE.

The nymph must lose her female friend
If more admired than she,—
But where will fierce contention end
If flowers can disagree?

Within the garden's peaceful scene
Appear'd two lovely foes,
Aspiring to the rank of queen,
The Lily and the Rose.

The Rose soon redden'd into rage,
And swelling with disdain,
Appeal'd to many a poet's page
To prove her right to reign.

The Lily's height bespoke command,
A fair imperial flower,
She seem'd design'd for Flora's hand,
The sceptre of her power.

This civil bickering and debate
The goddess chanced to hear,
And flew to save, ere yet too late,
The pride of the parterre.

Yours is, she said, the nobler hue,
And yours the statelier mien,
And till a third surpasses you,
Let each be deem'd a queen.

Thus soothed and reconciled, each seeks
The fairest British fair,
The seat of empire is her cheeks,
They reign united there.

IDEM LATINE REDDITUM.

Heu inimicitias quoties parit æmula forma,
Quam raro pulchræ, pulchra placere potest!
Sed fines ultrà solitos discordia tendit,
Cum flores ipsos bilis et ira movent.

Hortus ubi dulces præbet tacitosque recessûs,
Se rapit in partes gens animosa duas,
Hic sibi regales Amaryllis candida cultûs,
Illic purpureo vindicat ore Rosa.

Ira Rosam et meritis quæsita superbia tangunt,
Multaque ferventi vix cohibenda sinû,
Dum sibi fautorum ciet undique nomina vatûm,
Jusque suum, multo carmine fulta, probat.

Altior emicat illa, et celso vertice nutat,
Ceu flores inter non habitura parem,
Fastiditque alios, et nata videtur in usûs
Imperii, sceptrum, Flora quod ipsa gerat.

Nec Dea non sensit civilis murmura rixæ,
Cui curæ est pictas pandere ruris opes.
Deliciasque suas nunquam non prompta tueri,
Dum licet et locus est, ut tueatur, adest.

Et tibi forma datur procerior omnibus, inquit,
Et tibi, principibus qui solet esse, color,
Et donec vincat quædam formosior ambas,
Et tibi reginæ nomen, et esto tibi.

His ubi sedatus furor est, petit utraque nympham
Qualem inter Veneres Anglia sola parit;
Hanc penes imperium est, nihil optant amplius, hujus
Regnant in nitidis, et sine lite, genis.

THE NIGHTINGALE AND GLOW-WORM.

A NIGHTINGALE that all day long
Had cheer'd the village with his song,
Nor yet at eve his note suspended,
Nor yet when eventide was ended,
Began to feel, as well he might,
The keen demands of appetite;
When looking eagerly around,
He spied, far off upon the ground,
A something shining in the dark,
And knew the Glow-worm by his spark;
So stooping down from hawthorn top,
He thought to put him in his crop;
The worm, aware of his intent,
Harangued him thus right eloquent.—
"Did you admire my lamp," quoth he,
"As much as I your minstrelsy,
You would abhor to do me wrong,
As much as I to spoil your song,
For 'twas the self-same power divine
Taught you to sing, and me to shine,
That you with music, I with light,
Might beautify and cheer the night."
The songster heard his short oration,
And warbling out his approbation,
Released him, as my story tells,
And found a supper somewhere else.
Hence jarring sectaries may learn,
Their real interest to discern:
That brother should not war with brother,
And worry and devour each other,

But sing and shine by sweet consent,
Till life's poor transient night is spent,
Respecting in each other's case
The gifts of nature and of grace.
Those Christians best deserve the name,
Who studiously make peace their aim;
Peace, both the duty and the prize
Of him that creeps and him that flies.

VOTUM.

O MATUTINI rores, auræque salubres,
O nemora, et lætæ rivis felicibus herbæ,
Graminei colles, et amœnæ in vallibus umbræ!
Fata modò dederint quas olim in rure paterno
Delicias, procul arte, procul formidine novi,
Quam vellem ignotus, quod mens mea semper avebat,
Ante larem proprium placidam expectare senectam,
Tum demùm exatis non infeliciter annis,
Sortiri tacitum lapidem, aut sub cespite condi.

ON A GOLDFINCH

STARVED TO DEATH IN HIS CAGE.

TIME was when I was free as air,
The thistle's downy seed my fare,
My drink the morning dew;
I perch'd at will on every spray,
My form genteel, my plumage gay,
My strains for ever new.

But gaudy plumage, sprightly strain,
And form genteel were all in vain
And of a transient date,
For caught and caged and starved to death,
In dying sighs my little breath
Soon pass'd the wiry grate.

Thanks, gentle swain, for all my woes,
And thanks for this effectual close,
And cure of every ill!
More cruelty could none express,
And I, if you had shown me less,
Had been your prisoner still.

THE PINE APPLE AND THE BEE.

The Pine Apples in triple row
Were basking hot and all in blow,
A Bee of most discerning taste
Perceived the fragrance as he pass'd;
On eager wing the spoiler came,
And search'd for crannies in the frame,
Urged his attempt on every side,
To every pane his trunk applied,
But still in vain, the frame was tight
And only pervious to the light.
Thus having wasted half the day,
He trimmed his flight another way.
Methinks, I said, in thee I find
The sin and madness of mankind;
To joys forbidden man aspires,
Consumes his soul with vain desires;

Folly the spring of his pursuit,
And disappointment all the fruit.
While Cynthio ogles as she passes
The nymph between two chariot glasses,
She is the Pine Apple, and he
The silly unsuccessful Bee.
The maid who views with pensive air
The show-glass fraught with glittering ware,
Sees watches, bracelets, rings, and lockets,
But sighs at thought of empty pockets,
Like thine her appetite is keen,
But ah the cruel glass between!
Our dear delights are often such,
Exposed to view but not to touch;
The sight our foolish heart inflames,
We long for pine apples in frames;
With hopeless wish one looks and lingers,
One breaks the glass and cuts his fingers,
But they whom truth and wisdom lead,
Can gather honey from a weed.

HORACE.

BOOK II. ODE X.

Receive, dear friend, the truths I teach,
So shalt thou live beyond the reach
Of adverse fortune's power;
Not always tempt the distant deep,
Nor always timorously creep
Along the treacherous shore.

He that holds fast the golden mean,
And lives contentedly between

The little and the great,
Feels not the wants that pinch the poor,
Nor plagues that haunt the rich man's door.
Imbittering all his state.

The tallest pines feel most the power
Of wintry blast, the loftiest tower
Comes heaviest to the ground;
The bolts that spare the mountain's side,
His cloud-capt eminence divide
And spread the ruin round.

The well-inform'd philosopher
Rejoices with an wholesome fear,
And hopes in spite of pain;
If winter bellow from the north,
Soon the sweet spring comes dancing forth,
And nature laughs again.

What if thine heaven be overcast,
The dark appearance will not last,
Expect a brighter sky;
The God that strings the silver bow,
Awakes sometimes the Muses too,
And lays his arrows by.

If hinderances obstruct thy way,
Thy magnanimity display,
And let thy strength be seen;
But oh! if Fortune fill thy sail
With more than a propitious gale,
Take half thy canvass in!

A REFLECTION ON THE FOREGOING ODE.

And is this all? Can reason do no more
Than bid me shun the deep and dread the shore?
Sweet moralist! afloat on life's rough sea
The Christian has an art unknown to thee;
He holds no parley with unmanly fears,
Where duty bids he confidently steers,
Faces a thousand dangers at her call,
And trusting in his God, surmounts them all.

TRANSLATIONS FROM VINCENT BOURNE.

I. THE GLOW-WORM.

Beneath the hedge or near the stream,
A worm is known to stray,
That shows by night a lucid beam,
Which disappears by day.

Disputes have been and still prevail
From whence his rays proceed;
Some give that honour to his tail,
And others to his head.

But this is sure,—the hand of might
That kindles up the skies,
Gives *him* a modicum of light,
Proportion'd to his size.

Perhaps indulgent Nature meant
By such a lamp bestow'd,
To bid the traveller, as he went,
Be careful where he trod;

Nor crush a worm, whose useful light
Might serve, however small,
To show a stumbling stone by night,
And save him from a fall.

Whate'er she meant, this truth divine
Is legible and plain,
'Tis power Almighty bids him shine,
Nor bids him shine in vain.

Ye proud and wealthy, let this theme
Teach humbler thoughts to you,
Since such a reptile has its gem,
And boasts its splendour too.

II. THE JACKDAW.

THERE is a bird who by his coat.
And by the hoarseness of his note,
Might be supposed a crow;
A great frequenter of the church,
Where bishop-like he finds a perch,
And dormitory too.

Above the steeple shines a plate,
That turns and turns, to indicate
From what point blows the weather;
Look up,—your brains begin to swim,
'Tis in the clouds;—that pleases him,
He chooses it the rather.

Fond of the speculative height,
Thither he wings his airy flight,

And thence securely sees
The bustle and the raree-show
That occupy mankind below,
Secure and at his ease.

You think no doubt he sits and muses
On future broken bones and bruises,
If he should chance to fall;
No not a single thought like that
Employs his philosophic pate,
Or troubles it at all.

He sees that this great roundabout
The world, with all its motley rout,
Church, army, physic, law,
Its customs and its businesses
Are no concern at all of his,
And says,—what says he? Caw.

Thrice happy bird! I too have seen
Much of the vanities of men,
And sick of having seen 'em,
Would cheerfully these limbs resign
For such a pair of wings as thine,
And such a head between 'em.

III. THE CRICKET.

Little inmate, full of mirth,
Chirping on my kitchen hearth;
Wheresoe'er be thine abode,
Always harbinger of good,
Pay me for thy warm retreat,
With a song more soft and sweet,

In return thou shalt receive
Such a strain as I can give.

Thus thy praise shall be exprest,
Inoffensive, welcome guest!
While the rat is on the scout,
And the mouse with curious snout,
With what vermin else infest
Every dish, and spoil the best;
Frisking thus before the fire,
Thou hast all thine heart's desire.

Though in voice and shape they be
Form'd as if akin to thee,
Thou surpassest, happier far,
Happiest grasshoppers that are;
Theirs is but a summer's song,
Thine endures the winter long,
Unimpair'd and shrill and clear,
Melody throughout the year.

Neither night nor dawn of day
Puts a period to thy play.
Sing then—and extend thy span
Far beyond the date of man;
Wretched man, whose years are spent
In repining discontent,
Lives not, aged though he be,
Half a span compared with thee.

IV. THE PARROT.

In painted plumes superbly drest,
A native of the gorgeous east,
By many a billow tost,
Poll gains at length the British shore,
Part of the captain's precious store,
A present to his toast.

Belinda's maids are soon preferr'd
To teach him now and then a word,
As Poll can master it;
But 'tis her own important charge
To qualify him more at large,
And make him quite a wit.

"Sweet Poll!" his doting mistress cries,
"Sweet Poll!" the mimic bird replies,
And calls aloud for sack;
She next instructs him in the kiss,
'Tis now a little one like Miss,
And now a hearty smack.

At first he aims at what he hears
And listening close with both his ears,
Just catches at the sound;
But soon articulates aloud,
Much to the amusement of the crowd
And stuns the neighbours round.

A querulous old woman's voice
His humorous talent next employs,

He scolds and gives the lie;
And now he sings, and now is sick,
Here, Sally, Susan, come, come quick,
Poor Poll is like to die.

Belinda and her bird! 'tis rare
To meet with such a well-match'd pair,
The language and the tone,
Each character in every part
Sustain'd with so much grace and art,
And both in unison.

When children first begin to spell,
And stammer out a syllable,
We think them tedious creatures;
But difficulties soon abate,
When birds are to be taught to prate,
And women are the teachers.

THE SHRUBBERY.

WRITTEN IN A TIME OF AFFLICTION.

Oh happy shades! to me unblest,
Friendly to peace, but not to me,
How ill the scene that offers rest,
And heart that cannot rest, agree!

This glassy stream, that spreading pine,
Those alders quivering to the breeze,
Might sooth a soul less hurt than mine,
And please, if any thing could please.

But fixt unalterable care
Foregoes not what she feels within,
Shows the same sadness every where,
And slights the season and the scene.

For all that pleased in wood or lawn,
While peace possess'd these silent bowers,
Her animating smile withdrawn,
Has lost its beauties and its powers.

The saint or moralist should tread
This moss-grown alley, musing slow;
They seek like me the secret shade,
But not like me, to nourish woe.

Me fruitful scenes and prospects waste,
Alike admonish not to roam;
These tell me of enjoyments past,
And those of sorrows yet to come.

THE WINTER NOSEGAY.

What Nature, alas! has denied
To the delicate growth of our isle,
Art has in a measure supplied,
And winter is deck'd with a smile.
See, Mary, what beauties I bring
From the shelter of that sunny shed,
Where the flowers have the charms of the spring,
Though abroad they are frozen and dead.

'Tis a bower of Arcadian sweets,
Where Flora is still in her prime;
A fortress to which she retreats,
From the cruel assaults of the clime.
While earth wears a mantle of snow,
These pinks are as fresh and as gay,
As the fairest and sweetest that blow
On the beautiful bosom of May.

See how they have safely survived
The frowns of a sky so severe!
Such Mary's true love that has lived
Through many a turbulent year.
The charms of the late-blowing rose,
Seem graced with a livelier hue,
And the winter of sorrow best shows
The truth of a friend, such as you.

MUTUAL FORBEARANCE,

NECESSARY TO THE HAPPINESS OF THE MARRIED STATE.

THE lady thus address'd her spouse;—
What a mere dungeon is this house!
By no means large enough, and was it,
Yet this dull room and that dark closet,
Those hangings with their worn-out graces,
Long beards, long noses, and pale faces,
Are such an antiquated scene,
They overwhelm me with the spleen.

—Sir Humphrey shooting in the dark,
Makes answer quite beside the mark.
No doubt, my dear, I bade him come,
Engaged myself to be at home,
And shall expect him at the door
Precisely when the clock strikes four.
You are so deaf, the lady cried,
(And raised her voice and frown'd beside,)
You are so sadly deaf, my dear,
What shall I do to make you hear?
Dismiss poor Harry? he replies,
Some people are more nice than wise;
For one slight trespass all this stir?
What if he did ride, whip and spur,
'Twas but a mile,—your favourite horse
Will never look one hair the worse.
Well, I protest 'tis past all bearing!—
Child! I am rather heard of hearing.—
Yes, truly—one must scream and bawl,
I tell you you can't hear at all.
Then with a voice exceeding low,
No matter if you hear or no.
Alas! and is domestic strife,
That sorest ill of human life,
A plague so little to be fear'd,
As to be wantonly incurr'd;
To gratify a fretful passion,
On every trivial provocation?
The kindest and the happiest pair
Will find occasion to forbear,
And something every day they live,
To pity, and perhaps, forgive.

But if infirmities that fall
In common to the lot of all,
A blemish, or a sense impair'd,
Are crimes so little to be spared,
Then farewell all that must create
The comfort of the wedded state;
Instead of harmony, 'tis jar
And tumult and intestine war.

The love that cheers life's latest stage,
Proof against sickness and old age,
Preserved by virtue from declension,
Becomes not weary of attention,
But lives, when that exterior grace
Which first inspired the flame, decays.
'Tis gentle, delicate, and kind,
To faults compassionate or blind,
And will with sympathy endure
Those evils it would gladly cure.
But angry, coarse, and harsh expression
Shows love to be a mere profession,
Proves that the heart is none of his,
Or soon expels him if it is.

TO THE REV. MR. NEWTON.

AN INVITATION INTO THE COUNTRY.

The swallows in their torpid state
Compose their useless wing,
And bees in hives as idly wait
The call of early spring.

The keenest frost that binds the stream,
The wildest wind that blows,
Are neither felt nor fear'd by them,
Secure of their repose.

But man all feeling and awake
The gloomy scene surveys,
With present ills his heart must ache,
And pant for brighter days.

Old Winter halting o'er the mead,
Bids me and Mary mourn;
But lovely Spring peeps o'er his head,
And whispers your return.

Then April with her sister May
Shall chase him from the bowers,
And weave fresh garlands every day,
To crown the smiling hours.

And if a tear that speaks regret
Of happier times appear,
A glimpse of joy that we have met
Shall shine, and dry the tear.

TRANSLATION

OF

PRIOR'S CHLOE AND EUPHELIA.

Mercator, vigiles oculos ut fallere possit,
Nomine sub ficto trans mare mittit opes;
Lené sonat liquidumque meis Euphelia chordis,
Sed solam exoptant te, mea vota, Chlöe.

Ad speculum ornabat nitidos Euphelia crines,
Cum dixit mea lux, heus, cane, sume lyram.
Namque lyram juxta positam cum carmine vidit,
Suave quidem carmen dulcisonamque lyram.

Fila lyræ vocemque paro, suspiria surgunt,
Et miscent numeris murmura mœsta meis,
Dumque tuæ memoro laudes, Euphelia, formæ,
Tota anima interea pendet ab ore Chlöes.

Subrubet illa pudore, et contrahit altera frontem,
Me torquet mea mens conscia, psallo, tremo;
Atque Cupidineâ dixit Dea cincta coronâ,
Heu! fallendi artem quam didicere parum.

BOADICEA.

AN ODE.

When the British warrior queen,
Bleeding from the Roman rods,
Sought with an indignant mien,
Counsel of her country's Gods,

Sage beneath a spreading oak
Sat the Druid, hoary chief,
Every burning word he spoke
Full of rage and full of grief.

Princess! if our aged eyes
Weep upon thy matchless wrongs,
'Tis because resentment ties
All the terrors of our tongues.

Rome shall perish,—write that word
In the blood that she has spilt;
Perish hopeless and abhorr'd,
Deep in ruin as in guilt.

Rome for empire far renown'd,
Tramples on a thousand states,
Soon her pride shall kiss the ground,—
Hark! the Gaul is at her gates.

Other Romans shall arise,
Heedless of a soldier's name,
Sounds, not arms, shall win the prize,
Harmony the path to fame.

Then the progeny that springs
From the forests of our land,
Arm'd with thunder, clad with wings,
Shall a wider world command.

Regions Cæsar never knew,
Thy posterity shall sway,
Where his eagles never flew,
None invincible as they.

Such the bard's prophetic words,
Pregnant with celestial fire,
Bending as he swept the chords
Of his sweet but aweful lyre.

She with all a monarch's pride,
Felt them in her bosom glow,
Rush'd to battle, fought and died,
Dying, hurl'd them at the foe.

Ruffians, pitiless as proud,
Heaven awards the vengeance due;
Empire is on us bestow'd,
Shame and ruin wait for you!

HEROISM.

THERE was a time when Ætna's silent fire
Slept unperceived, the mountain yet entire,
When conscious of no danger from below,
She tower'd a cloud-capt pyramid of snow.
No thunders shook with deep intestine sound
The blooming groves that girdled her around;
Her unctuous olives and her purple vines,
(Unfelt the fury of those bursting mines,)
The peasant's hopes, and not in vain, assured,
In peace upon her sloping sides matured.
When on a day, like that of the last doom,
A conflagration labouring in her womb,
She teem'd and heaved with an infernal birth,
That shook the circling seas and solid earth.
Dark and voluminous the vapours rise,
And hang their horrors in the neighbouring skies,
While through the Stygian veil that blots the day,
In dazzling streaks the vivid lightnings play.
But oh! what muse, and in what powers of song,
Can trace the torrent as it burns along?
Havoc and devastation in the van,
It marches o'er the prostrate works of man,

Vines, olives, herbage, forests disappear,
And all the charms of a Sicilian year.
Revolving seasons, fruitless as they pass.
See it an uninform'd and idle mass,
Without a soil to invite the tiller's care,
Or blade that might redeem it from despair.
Yet time at length (what will not time achieve?)
Clothes it with earth, and bids the produce live.
Once more the spiry myrtle crowns the glade,
And ruminating flocks enjoy the shade.
Oh bliss precarious, and unsafe retreats,
Oh charming paradise of short-lived sweets!
The self-same gale that wafts the fragrance round
Brings to the distant ear a sullen sound,
Again the mountain feels the imprison'd foe,
Again pours ruin on the vale below,
Ten thousand swains the wasted scene deplore,
That only future ages can restore.
Ye monarchs, whom the lure of honour draws,
Who write in blood the merits of your cause,
Who strike the blow, then plead your own defence,
Glory your aim, but justice your pretence,
Behold in Ætna's emblematic fires
The mischiefs your ambitious pride inspires!
Fast by the stream that bounds your just domain,
And tells you where ye have a right to reign,
A nation dwells, not envious of your throne,
Studious of peace, their neighbours' and their own.
Ill-fated race! how deeply must they rue
Their only crime, vicinity to you!
The trumpet sounds, your legions swarm abroad,
Through the ripe harvest lies their destined road,

At every step beneath their feet they tread
The life of multitudes, a nation's bread;
Earth seems a garden in its loveliest dress
Before them, and behind a wilderness;
Famine and Pestilence, her first-born son,
Attend to finish what the sword begun,
And echoing praises such as fiends might earn,
And folly pays, resound at your return.
A calm succeeds;—but plenty with her train
Of heartfelt joys, succeeds not soon again,
And years of pining indigence must show
What scourges are the gods that rule below.

Yet man, laborious man, by slow degrees,
(Such is his thirst of opulence and ease,)
Plies all the sinews of industrious toil,
Gleans up the refuse of the general spoil,
Rebuilds the towers that smoked upon the plain,
And the sun gilds the shining spires again.

Increasing commerce and reviving art
Renew the quarrel on the conqueror's part,
And the sad lesson must be learn'd once more,
That wealth within is ruin at the door.

What are ye monarchs, laurel'd heroes, say,
But Ætnas of the suffering world ye sway?
Sweet nature stripp'd of her embroider'd robe,
Deplores the wasted regions of her globe,
And stands a witness at Truth's aweful bar,
To prove you there, destroyers as ye are.

Oh place me in some heaven-protected isle,
Where peace and equity and freedom smile,
Where no volcano pours his fiery flood,
No crested warrior dips his plume in blood,

Where power secures what industry has won,
Where to succeed is not to be undone,
A land that distant tyrants hate in vain,
In Britain's isle, beneath a George's reign.

THE

POET, THE OYSTER, AND SENSITIVE PLANT.

An Oyster cast upon the shore
Was heard, though never heard before,
Complaining in a speech well worded,
And worthy thus to be recorded:
  Ah hapless wretch! condemn'd to dwell
For ever in my native shell,
Ordain'd to move when others please,
Not for my own content or ease,
But toss'd and buffeted about,
Now *in* the water, and now *out*.
'Twere better to be born a stone
Of ruder shape and feeling none,
Than with a tenderness like mine,
And sensibilities so fine!
I envy that unfeeling shrub,
Fast-rooted against every rub.
The plant he meant grew not far off,
And felt the sneer with scorn enough,
Was hurt, disgusted, mortified,
And with asperity replied.
  When, cry the botanists, and stare,
Did plants call'd Sensitive grow there?

No matter when—a poet's muse is
To make them grow just where she chooses.
You shapeless nothing in a dish,
You that are but almost a fish,
I scorn your coarse insinuation,
And have most plentiful occasion
To wish myself the rock I view,
Or such another dolt as you.
For many a grave and learned clerk,
And many a gay unletter'd spark,
With curious touch examines me,
If I can feel as well as he;
And when I bend, retire, and shrink,
Says, well—'tis more than one would think.—
Thus life is spent, oh fie upon't!
In being touch'd, and crying, don't.
A poet in his evening walk,
O'erheard and check'd this idle talk.
And your fine sense, he said, and yours,
Whatever evil it endures,
Deserves not, if so soon offended,
Much to be pitied or commended.
Disputes though short, are far too long,
Where both alike are in the wrong;
Your feelings in their full amount,
Are all upon your own account.
You in your grotto-work enclosed
Complain of being thus exposed,
Yet nothing feel in that rough coat,
Save when the knife is at your throat,
Wherever driven by wind or tide,
Exempt from every ill beside.

And as for you, my Lady Squeamish,
Who reckon every touch a blemish,
If all the plants that can be found
Embellishing the scene around,
Should droop and wither where they grow,
You would not feel at all, not you.
The noblest minds their virtue prove
By pity, sympathy, and love;
These, these are feelings truly fine,
And prove their owner half divine.
His censure reach'd them as he deal it,
And each by shrinking show'd he felt it.

TO THE

REV. WILLIAM CAWTHORNE UNWIN.

Unwin, I should but ill repay
The kindness of a friend,
Whose worth deserves as warm a lay
As ever friendship penn'd,
Thy name omitted in a page
That would reclaim a vicious age.

An union form'd, as mine with thee,
Not rashly or in sport,
May be as fervent in degree,
And faithful in its sort,
And may as rich in comfort prove,
As that of true fraternal love.

The bud inserted in the rind,
The bud of peach or rose,
Adorns, though differing in its kind,
The stock whereon it grows
With flower as sweet or fruit as fair
As if produced by nature there.

Not rich, I render what I may;
I seize thy name in haste,
And place it in this first assay,
Lest this should prove the last.
'Tis where it should be, in a plan
That holds in view the good of man.

The poet's lyre, to fix his fame,
Should be the poet's heart;
Affection lights a brighter flame
Than ever blazed by art.
No muses on these lines attend,
I sink the poet in the friend.

END OF VOL. VIII.

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